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THE THREE GREATEST FORCES

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THE THREE GREATEST FORCES IN THE WORLD

AND THE MAKING OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

BY

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PART I
THE INCARNATION

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1905

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PREFACE

THE three great forces which have gone to the making of Western civilisation are the greatest in the world. These are the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and passing of Christ into the silent kingdom. The Western man, having come into communion with Christ, receives these forces to mould his character and the social economy.

The subject of this volume is the Incarnation as an evolutionary force in the making of European history. It will be followed by the Crucifixion and Resurrection as associated forces determining Western civilisation.

I have to acknowledge the kindness of the Editor of the *Contemporary Review* in allowing me to use the articles which I contributed to the *Review*, at various times.

My thanks are also due to my friend, Mr. James Cunningham, M.A., of St. Andrews, for reading the proofs; also to Professor D'Arcy W.

Thompson, C.B., of University College, Dundee, for reading the proof of the chapter on "Virgin Generation in the Higher Creation," and to Professor Patrick Geddes of University College, Dundee, for reading the proof of the chapter on "Virgin Generation in the Lower Creation."

W. W. P.

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BOOK I

THE UNIVERSE A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL FORCES

So much the rather, Thou Celestial Light,
Shine onward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

CHAPTER I

THE UNIVERSE A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL FORCES

Professors Tait and Stewart have given us a definition of force in these words, and warned us against the unjustified use of the word: "Force proper is a pull, push, weight, pressure, etc., and can be measured in the vernacular of engineers as equivalent to so many pounds weight, but the unjustifiable use of it applies it to work done by a force, so many pounds raised so many feet."[1]

Every force does work. We know a force only by the work it does, and the work is an equivalent of the force. Newton discovered that masses of matter, such as the sun and the earth, respond to each other directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance, resulting in a revolution, in the seasons and fruits of the year. The force and the work done must be conceived apart, as two distinct realities, before we understand them. In other words, they are cause and effect, output and outcome.

[1] *The Unseen Universe*, p. 104, edition 1904.

Newton's discovery meant two vast co-operant forces, the one in the sun drawing, the other in the earth resisting and then responding. The resulting orbit of the earth round the sun is the balance of the pressure and the resistance. Disturb this rhythm, and the earth would be flung into space, split into meteorites, or fall into the sun to stoke its fires. The universe is a system of social forces. We do not know any single solitary force working; what we see are interacting and counteracting forces. Every pull is met by a pull another way, every pressure by a resistance. The life on our globe is the work of physical, chemical, physiological, psychical forces of many kinds, working together in correspondence, sternly opposed, finely balanced, delicately adjusted. Forces of light, heat, magnetism, meeting forces in air, water, life are happily poised, and make the social peace of our earth. Our earth is a network of forces, physical, chemical, vital, vibrating with an intricate and active intercourse, working out the physical economies. The universe is a living majesty of society. Solitude were death, and there is no solitude or death anywhere. Death is the medium of reconstructing societies, and, shall we say, a force reconstructing relations.

Environment is the name we give to forces acting on the organic world from without, and Life is the name we give to the forces which answer to them. One of the noteworthy facts on which a fresh emphasis has been placed in our day, is

that the earliest structures which life pushes forward are those by which the organism is put into correspondence with the outer, besetting, soliciting world. The first structure which the embryo of the chick takes on after the breaking up of the germinal centre in which life lies sleeping is an external covering, the cell-wall as it is called. This cell-wall of the embryo is the beginning of the skin by which intercourse is opened with environing forces. Heat starts the external coat, and the outer coat by society with the outer world determines the growing structures. The correspondence organs, the eye and the ear, are formed by infoldings or inrollings of the skin. They are sacs formed in the skin. The coats, the lens, the nerves which go to make the eye are modified skin tissue. The brain is the central office of this society, and though it is a deep internal organ, it originates with the same social stimulus, and becomes ultimately the director of the whole inner economy on the co-operative principle.

Environment may be defined as the soliciting forces, and Life as the answering forces, working the outer and inner relations into a harmony. A solicited responsiveness is the secret of the whole life. Mr. Herbert Spencer has put into terse, lucid sentences this responsive principle by which the whole creation is bound together: "Organisation could not but begin on the surface, and having thus begun its subsequent career could not but be determined by its superficial origin."—"Life is

the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations."—"Leaving a margin for perturbations, the life will continue only while the correspondence continues; the completeness of the life is proportioned to the completeness of the correspondence."

The universality of the social law meets us everywhere, and sometimes with a surprise and always as a pleasure. Going a step farther we find that it is the happy doom of mutual assistance and support. The inorganic world is an intimate society within itself, every domain of it assists every other, and cannot do without this mutual service. The organic world is the same, every domain of it is reinforced by every other. Both organic and inorganic are interlocked with subsidies from the one to the other. Isolation of any domain is its destruction. A few samples of this interlaced assistance will carry our argument farther on the way.

Chemistry began its career by the discovery of oxygen, so basal is this gas. Now oxygen can be obtained isolated, but only in the jar of a laboratory. Nature has no jar for it; in nature it is always found in society. In chemical union with hydrogen, assisted by it, it pervades all nature as water; in a cohering union with nitrogen it belts the whole earth round as air. Large masses of matter, as suns and planets, are composed of atoms in society with each other, and with waves of ether. Atoms of matter and waves of ether

when massed together and insulated make suns and planets. The same atoms and ether, in a looser bond, fill all space in a quivering society. If, in the advances of the scientific imagination we have to give up the atomic and etheric theory and speak only of Motion, this motion is the work of forces. The resulting orbit of the planets is the work done by co-operating forces. The whole solar system, sun and planets, are moving round a centre in the constellation Lyra, measuring social forces on a scale beyond all count. In the resulting tides on our shores, keeping the ocean sweet, we mark the work done, the rhythm of harmony produced by the social relations of the earth with the moon. Efflux and accordance everywhere.

The sympathy of life with the mighty mass of the sun is a commonplace which becomes a miracle when you reflect on the detailed function. Light sleeps in the eye, but it can be waked up only by etheric tides which start from the sun 95,000,000 miles away, and travel at the rate of 186,000 miles in a second. With this crushing velocity these waves fall upon the eye, and infuse themselves into the coats, humours, lens. The eye is not hurt, but waked up as an infant from its cradle. It is a kiss, so gentle is this sympathy and society. Ruskin would call this inflow a spirit, nothing material, which had even the shadow of a weight. The same travelling tides assist the green matter of the leaf to make a chemical precipitate of carbon from the air. The function of the leaf is

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to extract carbon from the air and to fix it as a girth of wood into the tree, thus every year adding to the bulk and worth. But this work the green of the leaf can only do in company with summer light, assisted by warmer tides than winter supplies. Another order of strands in the radiations from the sun falls upon the growing fruit and corn. Heat strands move along with light strands, and fruit and corn come into company with them. Insipid, acrid, acid juices are sweetened by, what may be called, the carbon in the heat rays, and the result is our autumn fruits and stacks, which are the food of man and beast.

Similar co-operative assistance between different domains of the natural world carries marvels, when we look into them. The higher life of our globe is linked for its very existence with the grass of the field, the meadow and the hill: let this pasturage cease and our earth will become a cemetery of the dead. Milk is grass: in the last analysis all flesh is grass: our cereals are the seeds of grasses. As the function of digestion requires the co-operation of food, the function of reproduction requires the union of germ and sperm cells, in both plant and animal life. When the reciprocal law of sex reaches man, we have the beautiful society of love, home, motherhood, when we may be said to alight upon the basic elements of the social universe, before which the society of suns and moons are of little account. There is an order of plants which grow separate male and female flowers on the

same tree, such as the hazel and the oak; others have male and female flowers on separate trees, as the willow and the yew. The pollen is carried by the wind from the one flower to the other; the society of the wind comes to the assistance of the plants to produce fruit and seed.

There are a few thousand species and varieties of orchids. To fertilise the flower the agency of insects is called in, which carry the pollen from the flower of one plant to that of another, and as often to an allied species or variety. The attractions offered to insects to visit these plants, and the access for these visits, are obtained by such curiously modified structures, that for a long time the place of the orchid was a mystery to science. This strange interference on the part of the butterfly in an essential function of the plant effects the boon of cross-fertilisation, and it is by this social economy that the amazing variety of orchid blossoms has been obtained, which are the joy of all lovers of nature. The orchid is put into society with insects, as the hazel is with the wind, as the physiology of all the higher life is with the chemistry of the grass.

Perhaps one of the most recondite of these co-operations is that by which it is arranged that gall-flies should have their young brought up by plants, and that this trust should be scrupulously observed by them. It will expand our idea of social forces if we linger on this trust awhile. Every one is familiar with the round,

green, red, yellow balls, which become brown later, which grow on oak, willow, rose, familiarly known as galls. The gall-fly is provided with a pincer by which it divides a leaf or the bark of a twig, a delicate cut when we consider the substance divided is as thin as paper. Into this rent it inserts its egg, and then brushes the puncture with an acid from its own body. The plant seems to understand the meaning of the invasion, and at once takes charge of the future young. It secretes first a fine pith for the larva to rest upon, round this soft cushion a stronger tissue is secreted and laid, and over all a skin exactly like that of the natural bark or leaf. All this slowly grows into a ball, in the centre of which the grub reposes as in a cradle. It is a nest made for the young life by the plant at the call of the fly. Not unmindful of the æsthetics innate in nature, the outer membrane of the gall is coloured, and so coloured that it looks as if it was the fruit of the plant. Galls growing on catkins look very like a bunch of hanging grapes. A variety of galls is produced by different species of flies upon different trees, by a similar process, in obedience to the call to take care of the infant life of the fly. Penetrating every nook of the universe is the system of social forces, pleasing and surprising us.

In this social responsiveness we meet the concentric lines of a hundred centres of force, of larger and smaller areas, and we alight upon the truth of the unity of the universe. In this

system of social forces we learn the kinship of part with part and of all with the whole. The unity is instinct with the throbbing sympathy which pervades the universe. What we call unity is, after all, the cincture of society, and what we call society is the bartered assistance in a vast community of interests. Shall we say, the vibrations of the ether, or something like it, a motion, binds the physical order, and these with pulsations of affection the moral and spiritual order. Unity is represented on the physical side by Light, on the physiological side by Life, on the spiritual side by Love. God is light, God is life, God is love. In Him is the undying light, life, love, and we in Him never die, and the seeming death is a transformation.

> That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

Man has his place on the summits of the creation, and all that is there is involved in him, and he moves with it, ever living into events "that bear a weighty and a serious brow." In him the spelling of the creation has become the eloquence of a literature. He wears the crown of unity and looks upward and all around; he quivers with sympathy and burns with love. The social forces have their inmost ideas in him, and as he has an endowment which gives him a speciality

and superiority, he has made acquaintance with society not known below. Just as a rose is in commerce with society which does not affect a crystal of quartz, and the eagle is acquainted with forces which the rose does not know, so man is in communion with more inward and intense relations. He is farther into the secrets of the commanding system of social forces. We shall find the last of these secrets in our Western civilisation.

The destiny of every creature and of every organ of the creature is fixed from the beginning. Every life is a newcomer, and its destiny is to make acquaintance with the Boundless out of which it has come. Lower and higher orders of life are differenced by the discovery they make of the paternal domain. The sea-anemone has a poor knowledge of the society around it, the fish has knowledge of the deep sea, the bird of air and land. Man responds to the information made to him of the spiritual universe. He becomes a theist, pantheist, mystic, or all at the same time. He becomes a Christian having discovered Christ in the boundless, and become sympathetic with Him. He worships, and makes epics and lyrics of this sympathy, and all history by this worshipful society. Marcus Aurelius says: The soul of the universe is of the social disposition.

The problem of fate and freedom is always with us. The surrounding universe, the old domain, the environment, is fate, named God, Power, Love, Infinite. That man is able to

answer God is his freedom. Refuse to answer and he is under fate; answer cordially and it is religion; answer feebly and it is a disease of religion. There is a splendour in the fated universe, and there is a splendour in our free response. I accept the universe, said a New England philosopher, challenged by the unkindness in it. We have to; we had better; we cannot evade or escape the environing powers. To accept it cheerfully, answering the love in it by our love, is freedom. We are now sons. To accept it sullenly or in a feud with it is fate, answering love with a grudge or bad blood. We are now in the doom of slaves. The manner of society solves the problem of fate and freedom.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL FORCES MAKING RELIGION

Mr. Herbert Spencer, with his clear, perceiving mind, has recognised the religious faculty and society as the function of it. Society, as the function, thus: "Considering all faculties, as we must on this supposition (of evolution) to result from accumulated modifications caused by the intercourse of the organism with its environment, we are obliged to admit that there exist in the environment certain phenomena or conditions which have determined the growth of this feeling in question (the religious feeling), and so we are obliged to admit that it is as normal as any other 'faculty.'"[1] The determining environment of this society is given thus: "Unlike the ordinary consciousness, the religious consciousness is concerned with that which lies beyond the sphere of sense."

Our higher nature, by which we are removed far from the sentient world below us, may be said

[1] *First Principles*, p. 16.

to be layered—to speak in terms of biology—with three main faculties. The reasoning faculty communicates with the world of sense and translates its laws and utilities to us; the ethical faculty communicates with human society and reads to us our duty to our neighbour; the religious faculty communicates with spiritual, unseen, divine society —whichever adjective we choose may be taken to qualify this society,— and reconciles us to it. This is paralleled by the social functions of the body. Each organ of the body has its own special intercourse with special forces of sun and earth, while all are united by the unseen spirit or power we call Life. The eye with light, organs of respiration with air, heart and blood with heat, organs of digestion with the chemistry of food, muscles with the electricity in them and both with the will which sets them in movement. The environment may be described as the imperial of the sun and the provincial of the earth.

The social sphere of the religious faculty is outside the sphere of sense, and the intercourse of this society is a commonplace the world over and through all time. In the sphere beyond sense man has found Him for Whom he has many names, —Jehovah the ever-present, Zeus the shining one, Jupiter the father in heaven, the One of one in ancient Egypt, Tien the eternal in China, Aditi the boundless in India, Tangaloa the absolute in Polynesia, Michabo the great Spirit among the Red Indians, the God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Christian world. These conceptions come after the illuminating society. The facts derived from this intercourse are the religions of the world, which are the obtrusive factors in the making of civilisation. The religious faculty is no other than the human forces drawn into intercourse with the soliciting forces of the unseen universe, the universal life, the eternal love. All along the course of the ages it has been an arduous endeavour for man to come to terms with the Will over all and over him, but the arduousness has been nobly sustained. The coercion or persuasion of the Eternal is an urgent imperative, and the human faculty has risen to the strain and never failed to begin the intercourse and meet the interviews required. In this experienced response is the making of religion.

The words religion and worship are in familiar use to express this high society. They are words, however, which require looking after. They have been in such common use that frequency has paled them into platitude and stiffened them into phrase. They have lost accuracy and suggestion. Even religious men will wake up as out of a dream when it is bluntly put to them that their religion means that they have heard a call from the unseen universe, and that their worship is an answer to the matter of the call. If we consider for a while the medium in which this call has been heard time out of mind and the manner in which the answer was given, we shall be put a little farther on the

way of understanding the social forces that have gone to the making of religion.

One medium is Nature.

We look at the moor-hen teaching her chick to swim, and we pass into a reverie on the care and tenderness by which one creature sets another in its place in the creation; and we see the pictures of a vaster care and tenderness of which we are the attention in the Eternal love. We hear the eerie screams of the curlew on the Highland moor in spring, where it goes from the seaside in the breeding season, and we feel that the bleak moor-land is not a home for the creature though it is love time; and we ourselves touch the sense of sadness and solitude in love and awake to a sense of something better awaiting us than the best in time. You hear the lark in spring pressing the sharps and flats of the air into song, thrilling with quavers of joy, and you feel that in nerve-tissue is incarnate the joy of other worlds. The odour of the hay-rick and the mown fields brings to you the memory of blithe summer days and blithesome society of times which can never be again, and you feel the pensiveness immanent in the creation which wakes in you the future of days to be. We look at the mountain line against the western sky and the mist and dust of the day turned into the evening flush of ruby and gold and green, and the scenery sends to you the thought that there is on the horizon of our setting days that which is beyond the common, an unexpected meaning in

the dust and mist of time. It is the thought of God speaking to our thought, the feeling of God striking on our feeling, and we moving towards the infinite from which we have emerged. It is a sacredness leading up to the Majesty of sacredness.

Grote writes: "Grecian antiquity cannot be at all understood except in connection with the Greek religion." The Greek mind is typical of this sensitiveness to nature, and nature is a mediation which leads up to society with the spiritual universe. His oreads, dryads, nereids were the divineness or divinity in the ideas and emotions which lay entwined in hills, woods, streams, in which he found his sanctuaries. Our Wordsworth is the Anglo-Saxon counterpart of the Greek mind. The spring buttercup is a kindly unassuming spirit, to which he sings, as doth behove, hymns in praise; the linnet speaks wisdom to him in his music; the vernal wood gives him more "than all the sages can"; the meanest flower sends thoughts to him too deep for tears; he feels a presence in nature which disturbs him. "In solitude such intercourse was mine"; "Therefore am I a worshipper of nature." We have come a long way from Grecian antiquity, and though educated by it do not fit ourselves into it, and we misread its gods and goddesses. We will come into sympathy with it by sympathy with Wordsworth. Nature makes a sanctuary where the social forces of religion meet, but no one worships

a sanctuary. The sanctuary is only the place of tryst. The Greek met with the infinite and eternal of God, the Absolute of Plato, the First Cause of Aristotle,[1] in the medium of nature.

Another medium is human nature.

The Roman mind took another direction, and its relation to the sphere beyond sense is the second typical distinction of religion. Man and his faculties and interests, the wonderful in what happens to him, the critical in history, the inscrutable in the social and family economy—these built the sanctuary where the Roman met the Infinite and conversed with the Fatherly power in heaven. The oldest temple built in Rome, eight granite columns of which still remain in the ruinous Forum of to-day, commemorates the passage of the Italian tribes from the nomad to the agricultural estate, dedicated to Saturn. Early in the making of Rome was fought the decisive battle of Regillus against the league of the thirty cities, jealous or afraid of her rising star. The day was going against her, when a body of horsemen flanked or charged the enemy and changed the fortune of the day. Two horsemen rode from the field twelve miles away to announce the victory to the anxious people assembled in the Forum. The heated messengers told their story, washed their horses, and slaked their thirst at the fountain of Juturna hard by and disappeared, fleeted back to join their

[1] τὸ ὄν of Plato, and τὸ πρῶτον κινοῦν of Aristotle.

comrades. Rome saw a divine interference. The scene stood divinely idealised before them. Sergius, the high pontiff, steps forward and asks for a temple on the site where the victory was announced. Macaulay finds in this scene one of those romances of history which fires the imagination of the poet, and touches to fine issues the inner truth of things. In his lay of the battle the Pontiff speaks—

> Here hard by Vesta's temple,
> Build me a stately dome,
> Unto the great Twin Brethren,
> Who fought so well for Rome.

This was the temple of Castor and Pollux, surrounded by thirty-six fluted Corinthian columns, each forty-seven feet high and five in diameter, three of which still remain on their lofty platform with a fine fragment of the entablature, making a pathetic spectacle in the wreckage of the Roman Forum, unearthed in our day.

Cicero wrote of this temple, 500 years after it was built, that it "was the most illustrious of all monuments, a witness of the whole political life of Rome." The political, ethical, social, religious economy of Rome was a unity, and hung together by an essential cohesion, the Roman *jus sacrum*, sacred law, was a part of the *jus publicum*, public law. The Roman and man rational nowhere, in any sense whatever, worshipped dead or ideal horses, or raised abstractions of heroism

and victory into the rank of God. He built his temple that it might be a place of meeting with the spiritual Supreme, and he enshrines in it a memory of persons or deeds or events by which to excite communion with him. As the Greek was sensitive to the divine ideas and emotions lodged in the powers and phases of nature, the Roman was sensitive more particularly to the divine ideas and emotions entangled in the powers of man and the diversity of his interests. He used the divineness diffused in man, and in every realm of his affairs to bring himself into the high, unearthly relation which pressed upon him.

Augustus built and restored and left eighty temples in Rome as his legacy to the people, that by one or other manner of sensitiveness, the human response to the divine may be excited. The State had ordained religious festivals for half the year, which Marcus Aurelius cut down to about 130, to realise this relation. The Roman tried to see in his emperor the realised idea of the human sacredness, and called him divine, though emperor after emperor failed him, that he may look elsewhere for the divine Man and be educated to find Him when He appeared. It was reported to the Senate that the soul of Lucius Verus had been seen as an eagle to pass from the funeral pyre. The senate decreed him divine honours, in this way to enforce the eternal in the idea of man. Clementia was deified mercy, Ceres deified corn, Lares and Penates deified home and

hearth. Along this line the Roman passed into the sanctuary of Him, whom Epictetus calls the supreme God, Cicero the omnipresent God, Cleanthes the Almighty for ever. The distinction between God and gods runs through Roman literature, and the common phrase, Jupiter, the father of gods and men, explains it. It was taken from Homer who frequently speaks of Zeus as father of gods and men.[1] The gods are the divineness around us. Plato shows us the principle underlying this concept. "I am a great lover of these processes of division and generalisation, they help me to speak and to think, and if I find any man who is able to see a One and a many in nature, him I follow, and walk in his steps as if he were a god."[2] Tennyson has made melodious for us Plato's truth of the one and the many

> The never-changing One
> And ever-changing Many, in praise of Whom
> The Christian bell, the cry from off the mosque,
> And vaguer voices of Polytheism
> Make but one music.

Gibbon writes of Roman life: "The innumerable deities and rites of polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of public and private life." The innumerable deities translated into scientific thought means that the Roman had a perpetual vision of the supernatural power

[1] πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.
[2] *Phædrus*, Jowett's *Plato*, vol. ii. p. 144.

and love investing human life, which we do well to imitate and cultivate. The innumerable rites of polytheism is only our antiquated and vulgar way of saying that the Roman made every endeavour to become conscious of this Supreme authority over him and to come into correspondence. It is necessary here to notice, and that with the acute accent, that this way of speaking of ancient religions reduces the highest thought of antiquity into a tangle of ineptitude and silliness; and we are much in need to clarify our minds of the effeteness which the use of the words gods, deities, rites of polytheism infects our thinking. These words once asserted burning realities, and signified meeting with God in every look of nature and man, and in this medium to have found converse with the High Supreme. They speak of the elementals which fibre all religion, the Responsiveness of man to the divine drawing.

The third exciting medium of religion is Death.

If now we join with the ideas of religion and worship handed to us by these two pronounced races of antiquity another class of ideas which we find on the farther fringes of civilisation among races to-day which have been stationary for centuries, and others who have not budged from extreme primitiveness, we reach a phase of religion which in religion as a science is known as animism. By animism is meant the sensitiveness to departed spirits which transports men into

communion with the Unseen. It is sometimes reported as the worship of ancestors, metaphysically the worship of death, vulgarly the worship of ghosts. Here we have the event of death hallowing and intensifying the human personality and throwing round it the halo of never dying, in order to excite the high relation to God. China is at present the metropolis of this order of worship. Professor Legge affirms, who has spent a long life as missionary there, that the Chinese do not regard the ancestors as divine. "The name of God was not given to them, but honour was done to them as ministers of God."[1] Tio and Tien is the name they give to God, and this distinguished scholar of Chinese literature informs us that this word carries the same meaning as Jehovah.

Tennyson has interpreted for the modern world this society of forces as more that commemoration and less than worship. For seventeen years he felt the departed spirit of Arthur Hallam moving in him, inwoven into his thoughts and in aspects of nature, the presence of a very ghostliness; "his being working in mine own," the nearness to a vaster personality, to one who breathed an ampler day, whose voice he heard in the rolling air, whom he saw standing in the rising sun, a diffusive power, mixed with nature and with God. There must be few of us—and these few whose nature wants a supreme note—who have not parted on

[1] *Religions of China*, p. 70.

these shores with some one who had become a part of ourselves, whose passing through the ever-open door left it wide open to us, whose faces as we saw them in death assured us that they were spirits untouched by corruption, whose presence is beside us in hours of thought and surprise, the thought of whom sends us ranging space and throbbing with mystic pulsations, to meet whom again thrills us as a joy of the future and as an accented evidence of the undispersed personality after death. Mr. Watts-Dunton has said: "Death striking love but strikes to deify." The spirits of the dead become deities like that of Greece and Rome, and a ministration leading up to communion with the eternal and fatherly God of the spirits of all flesh. The scholarly biographer of Professor Drummond has told us that "one man said to him the other day, 'Since Drummond died, I have not been able to help praying to him.'"[1]

The way Tennyson went in communion with the glorified dead is the way the ministration of love and death has taken susceptible souls. He passed from society with the amplified ghostly personality of Arthur Hallam into communion with Christ, and all of us whose blood has the Western strain go the same way with a stricken heart, while Eastern races pass from the memory of the dead into communion with the eternal Spirit. He has placed this evolution of social

[1] Professor G. A. Smith, D.D.

forces, the communion with Christ, as the portal to his master-song of the immortal in love and victory in life and death.

> Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
> Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
> By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
> Believing where we cannot prove.

One of the more striking finds in the recent uncovering of the buried Roman Forum is the huge, lofty podium or platform on which the Romans raised their temples, when as yet the dome lifting the temple into the dome of the sky was not discovered. Eight granite columns of the temple of Saturn still remain, mentioned before, standing on a massive platform twenty feet above the Via Sacra which skirts the base of it. On a still loftier platform stands the temple of Castor and Pollux, also mentioned before. These are the two oldest temples in Rome. The sanctuary of meeting was approached by a long flight of a marble stairway. The ministration of nature in its forces and aspects, the inscrutable of man, in his melodies and discords, the ampler personality obtained in the shock of death,—this is the stairway which slopes up and takes man in the older civilisations into the sanctuary of communion with the Power and Fatherliness over all. No one worships the stair or sanctuary. He meets the Eternal in the sacred place.

At this point we bring into perspective the

natural selection of the Hebrew race, the most phenomenal which has appeared in the cosmic process of human civilisation. Both the individual and the social organism are out of the beaten track of antiquity, and yet they stand in a historic unity with the past as natural selection of every kind does. It is a mountain range towering above the plains, but with the same relations to the low country as every mountain range has. It has emerged and evolved out of the old civilisation, and shows reversions throughout its eventful history to the classes above described. The distinction of the selection is in the hold which the kernel of the nation kept on the unity of the Godhead, and the persistence with which it sustained relations with the unseen without the sensuous medium of nature or the semi-sensuous medium of departed spirits. When we say this we give it a unique character. The small kernel of the nation was large enough and strong enough to be diffusely influential, and to create for centuries an atmosphere within the narrow borders of Palestine and after the dispersion within the Greek and Roman world. All the lapses into the lower types, which were serious, left the kernel untouched, the Remnant, which is the Semitic equivalent for natural selection, undissipated.

To have heard a call from the spiritual world and to have answered to the matter of it, and migrated out of Ur of the Chaldees into an unknown country, surrendering to this assault, show

the basic social forces working in Abraham's life. This responsiveness, in its elect form, gives stress and tone and colour to the whole history of this natural selection; just as the Puritan selection, which England threw out, has given character to the Anglo-Saxon republic over sea. Professor Sayce affirms that the religion of Chaldæa was sensitive to "spirits" in nature, though, if by spirits of nature is meant abstractions of law, order, and beauty, we ought not to use the word spirits, which must be confined to the spirits of the deceased. But the reversions of Abrahamism show traces of both types of religion, and further research will perhaps reveal that the Chaldean species was in part inspired by the discovery of divine ideas in nature, and in part by the discovery of the glorified human personality after death. Aaron made a calf in the desert to satisfy the old Hebrew feeling, the selection being but nascent then. In the days of Saul, commerce with familiar spirits—spirits who assist when called—was widespread, and in this we see the medium of spirits reappearing, probably now an imposture.

The originality of Abraham, as the creator of a type, consists in this that he steered clear of both the mediums of nature and of spirits in his communion with the Eternal, stripped himself of convention and custom. He went direct into the invisible sanctuary. And his genius perceived—for science lies hidden in men of genius of all ages, —that this simple society could be transmitted

by the law of inheritance and the transmission safeguarded. Throughout its history the strength of Hebraism lay in the directness of spiritual correspondence, and in the clearness with which it perceived moral duties and in the social economy composed in this medium. The communion of Moses with Jehovah, the Eternal, supplied him with the diamond-cut summary of moral duties preserved to this day as the Ten Commandments. Communion with God was the ideal life of the Hebrew; obedience to the information received in this intercourse was his endeavour, and failure was his penitence, which, in alluring style, is found in the lyric literature which to this day is as fresh to the human need and yearning as ever. Israel had the genius to see that this specialised spirituality, without the common media used by other nations, and a specialised civilisation were mutually dependent. In a perennial struggle and in much weakness the dependence was conserved, and the victory handed over to the Christian succession, in which it found a new home.

The weakness of Hebraism lay in its inevitable situation, in the childhood of the world in which its lot was cast. Its weakness mainly consisted in the defences by which it safeguarded its strength. It protected itself against the intrusion of the medium of nature by adopting a medium of rites and rituals, which became a snare, which took the place of righteousness, against which the prophets maintained a long protest. By keeping

immortality in the background, it protected itself against the mediation of spirits, which the later psalmists and prophets brought to the front to maintain its mission. Not but that immortality was ever lost sight of, you can read it between the lines; immortality was not much spoken about: you overhear it.

But both by its strength and its weakness Hebraism had the future. It was informed with a great hope, which burned brightest on darkest days, a hope which proved to be of no use to it, but of great use to the world. It was not a local or tribal hope. Abraham migrated westward, and the look of his race is ever westward. In the word, Elohim, "gods," lay Greek idealism, which in Alexandria found its inmost idea in the doctrine of the Logos. In such phrases as were applied to human greatness, "Ye are gods," "Jehovah the great king above all gods," we have the Roman ideal of human nature. Christianity, the lineal heir of Hebraism, has served itself heir to Greece and Rome, Slav, Teuton, Celt.

It is only necessary here that we link on Christianity into this succession as receiving the affluent heritage of the past, which drew the modern world out of the ancient. We are to go into considerable detail on the subject of the forces which have gone to the making of it and the correlated social economy, and all that we now say is that it has the whole past in a summary with a speciality of its own. This

speciality is responsiveness to Christ in the Godhead, who carried His person into the unseen, fertilised and empowered by a life in the flesh, by death and the passing out of it. This responsiveness is added to that of the Almighty Creator and Eternal Father, which belongs to the older civilisations.

Religion will now write itself into a definition. Religion is the response of the human soul to the drawing of the infinite Power and eternal Father in the spiritual universe, discovered in the powers of nature, the inscrutable in man, the eternal in personality. The Christian religion includes the added response which is given to Christ on His accession into the Godhead after the experience in the flesh, which accession makes the affluent environment which gives character to the Western man, making a more kindly access into the unseen.

Many definitions of religion have been attempted by eminent thinkers, all good of their kind. They show us the affluence of the religious content, but few of them touch the heart of religion. We are tempted amid this diversity and failure to let a definition of religion stand over, but it presses for distinctness in the interests of history. Mr. Bryce, in his preface to the fourth edition of his *Holy Roman Empire*, urges that his object in this classical work is, "to describe the Holy Empire itself as an institution or system, the wonderful offspring of a body of beliefs and traditions which have almost wholly passed away from the world."

Here we see the method which misses the equities of history, and shows us the need of a definition of religion. As a system, the Holy Roman Empire was the offspring of beliefs, and these are the offspring of social forces, one in man, the other in the unseen issuing from the person of Christ there. The system is thus the grandchild of interacting forces, the effect of effects. The Holy Roman Empire succeeds to the classic Roman Empire, Papal cæsarism to Augustan cæsarism. Both imperialisms have much in common, for man is the common denominator. But the Papal empire has its distinction in that it takes authority from Christ, and the forces charged with sanctions consist in the life, death, and passing of Christ. These worshipful forces of a new society are not mentioned by Mr. Bryce.

Belief, tradition, system, institution are first effects and then helpful forces, but are of the nature of circumstance, essentially transitory, and as Mr. Bryce says they have wholly passed away. The magnetic, polar forces endure and remain to this day. Another Holy Roman empire is in full swing this day with the enduring forces, the same as that which began the modern world in A.D. 800.

Therefore it is incumbent, though definitions are aggressive things, that we have a definition of religion in terms of social forces of the permanent order.

CHAPTER III

IMPERIAL FORCES IN WESTERN CIVILISATION

Looking into the forces working out the drama of Western civilisation we must advert to the argument already adduced that the universe is a system of social forces, and more particularly that religion is the work done by one force which is in man answering to another and urging force which is in the spiritual universe, and that the harmony or adjustment of the two forces is the crucial problem both for the individual and for the social economy. These forces we name the superior and inferior, the imperial and provincial, a counterpart in the physical world to the solar and secular.

Now it is as strange as it is assuredly true that our historians of this whole period of 1900 years of the Western world—the most momentous in the roll of time—have given us a wholly one-sided account of the forces that have gone to the making of Western character and society, and brought us where we are to-day. And worse, it

is doubly one-sided. As a matter of course, the factor man is here; the resisting and conceding force in him is all that is spoken to; the human response is there. But to what that response was given—the eager, drawing, pulling Force,—and why it is what it is, is only alluded to, or spoken darkly about, or sent into a cloud of generality, and that with some haste. Nor is the work done —the religion under-girding revolutions—related to the drawing force, by the grade of the responding harmony. This way, no just historic perspective of the drama of this latter-day civilisation can be got. A clear law of nature requires that the two forces—the imperial and provincial—be set definitely before us, and rigorously placed into relation, the one with the other and with the work done.

We shall compass our object by a brief review of the histories, given to us by eminent men and masterly minds, of the great turning periods which mark progress. The neglected factor will then be made apparent.

Mr. Morley is the brilliant historian of the Puritan age and Cromwell is his hero; and of Puritanism Carlyle had already said that it is "the last of all our heroisms." Mr. Morley has burnt incense on the altar of this heroism, and has read it to us with an opulence of thought and a polished force of style. He has put in forefront, in informing, compact sentences, the inner force in this and every other heroic movement: "Taxation

and religion have ever been the two prime movers in human revolutions, in the civil troubles in the seventeenth century both these powerful factors were combined."[1] Now here is the crux. Mr. Morley has failed to take this lucid generality into its detail, and show us the content of the powerful factor of religion. A variety of effects are painted for us, all good in their way. Free inquiry and free conscience are "the twin pillars of protestantism"; again, "The substitution of the book for the church was the essence of the protestant revolt, and it was the essence of Cromwell's whole being";[2] "Puritanism, like the reformation generally, was a revolt against the leaden yoke of convention, ordinance, institution."[3]

For a brief moment our author comes into the space and sky of the cerulean forces and then shies off. "Firm in his belief in direct communion with God, a sovereign power unseen; hearkening for the divine voice, his steps guided by the divine, yet he moved full in the world."[4] Communion with God brings us among the social forces which came into action in the Reformation and Puritan age. The veil is lifted for a moment and then let fall again, not to be lifted again, and we are left outside the facts. Circumstance is shut down upon us. Another more specialised communion was working. The specific imperial forces, which swayed men at the

[1] *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 21.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 368.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 80.

time, are to be found in the Person of Christ in the heavens, empowered by His peculiar life on earth, His peculiar death, His peculiar passing out of death,—communicated to the human faculty by correspondence with them. When Mr. Morley assigns communion with God and hearkening to the Divine voice as the strength of Cromwell, he shows us that noble detachment of mind by which he enters into human ways widely distant from his own. But in 500 pages he has written a history of the Puritan struggle which was almost wholly sceptred by the specialised communion with Christ, and by forces issuing from His worshipful presence in the heavens, which were the making of what he has called, "those giant puritan fibres."[1] But he mentions the name of Christ once or twice in a casual way; and has no reference, in however slight a measure, to the containing forces. It is not easy to reach that higher plane when we see as others see, and come into sympathy with the mystery in our world. We are thankful for Mr. Morley's *Oliver Cromwell*, and we only point out the limitations which disturb historic perspective from the limitations of human sympathy.

Froude is the passionate advocate of the claims of the Reformation to the gratitude of mankind. He has also said that but for the Calvinists that movement had been left unfinished and even undone, though who those Calvinists were in their

[1] *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 494.

inner spirit or what were the locks in which their Samson strength lay are questions which perplexed him. He never saw the primary causes of the epoch of history in which he took no ordinary pleasure, the forces which overthrew what he calls the most formidable conspiracy against the liberties of mankind which the world had seen. He repeats time and again, that the cause working in this revolutionary epoch was the revolt of the laity against the tyranny of the clergy, almost a despairing explanation. An intellect, so acute as his, must have seen that such an assigned cause can only be a shift of despair. Tyranny is a relative state, the majority of mankind have always lived and to this day live under some kind of tyranny. The Papal tyranny is in full force still, at least the half of Europe likes it, and is even passionate about it. At the period of the so-called Reformation, the men who were feeling the tyranny did not at first know why they were feeling it, and only asked that their religious tyrants should be moral men, and in that period of temporary decadence they did not happen so to be. So deep are the enduring forces of history that the men who are the subjects of them do not know what is working in them. Later on, the majority of the European peoples struggled hard and fought the Thirty Years' War to preserve this useful tyranny.

A tyranny is a tyranny only to those who have gone past the system to which it belongs, and find

themselves in another order of things. This is the central point in every revolution. What was the new order of things in which men found themselves at this period? What was the inner nature of the liberty wanted? This is not a subtle or obscure question. The answer is written in sunbeams in the lives of the great actors in the drama, in the millions of lives which have come under its influence, in the institutions and conventions created, in the lives of Froude's own great heroes, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer. The answer can be compressed in a sentence. The oppression which the men of the epoch felt was the intervention of pope, priest, sacraments between them and the unseen Christ in the heavens. The liberty they wanted was to be left alone, to come unaided by official interference into the shrine of this unseenness. The prime force which impelled masses of men out of the Papal system was a revived species of direct, personal, immediate correspondence with the Power and Love in the spiritual universe, which was now felt to be clouded by human and sacramental mediation. The watchword of this revolution was put into the formula, —Justification by Faith. Froude actually says that this formula is a metaphysical something unintelligible to reason.[1]

It is curious to see the trouble this formula has given to the literary and ethical genius of Matthew Arnold, who finds in it a very far-fetched and

[1] *Council of Trent*, p. 205.

certainly most obscure expression for "a joyful emotion" which makes "moral action perfect,"—"the drop of truth in the ocean of verbiage with which the controversy on justification by faith has flooded the world."[1] Little wonder that we have lost our bearings on the ocean of history, for scientific history is a modern growth, and the social forces which are the north and south poles have only got their right accents, when evolution became the light of our thinking. Justification by faith, in the evolutionary dialect, means the imparted benefits from that superior correspondence, without a sacramental mediation, of social forces which compose the highest order of the Christian religion. The vogue of formula will not survive three centuries. Time rusts its original freshness, and it becomes a catchword, a verbiage if you like; but we liberate the original thought in it which is for all time. Christ said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me," which means, You are in communication with God the Father, now when I am gone, communicate with Me also.

Passing downwards from the epoch of the Reformation into the mediæval times we will take the guidance of Mr. Bryce. His *Holy Roman Empire* is now a classic of that troubled, shaded period of history. On Christmas day A.D. 800 Pope Leo III. placed on Charles's barbaric head the diadem of the Cæsars, and enthroned him Emperor,

[1] *Essays on Criticism*, First Series, p. 346.

of all Europe. The Vicar of Christ constitutes Charles supreme over the civil affairs of the Western peoples, and by this act constitutes himself the superior of Charles with power to depose princes and dissolve subjects from civil obedience. "From that moment modern history began."[1] This coronation was "the central event of the Middle Age."[2] If it had not been, "the history of the world would have been different. In one sense indeed it has scarcely a parallel."[3]

Two questions emerge from these precise, crisp, strong assertions by a master of his subject. What was the inner meaning of this fontal event, and what were the forces which so eventuated? Too much insistence cannot be laid on the truth that the values of events and facts are obtained wholly from the forces which work them out. Mr. Bryce answers these questions: "It is on the religious life that nations repose."[4] This is the summed account, the sole reference to the foundations on which the middle age reposes, and the fountain from which the modern world began. The slab of red Egyptian porphyry on which Charles kneeled and received the Papal hand of consecration can still be seen in St. Peter's of Rome to-day. Mr. Bryce's reason is like that antique porphyry which localises the event, but cannot speak to us of what happened. The religious life on which the middle age reposed,

[1] *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 49.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 50. [3] *Ibid.* p. 50. [4] *Ibid.* p. 92.

and from which the modern world took its course is not explained, only touched upon, localised in that event so generally mentioned in one single sentence, in this masterly history. Aristotle long ago said that "poetry is more philosophical than history." It is so because facts are not related rightly to factors, events to emotions, and religion to social forces.

Charles is here representing the Western world still on the lines of Cæsarism, in a new order of religious relations. But what is the Pope doing here? The Pope who entrusts to Charles the secular interests of the Western peoples is the vicar of the historic Christ who lived and died and passed into the sanctuary of the unseen. In this exalted capacity he is accepted by prince, noble, peasant. The forces which Christ carried with Him into the spiritual unseenness are the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, by which His Person on earth was fertilised and empowered. It was with these forces that the human faculty has come into communication, from which for these 800 years resource and inspiration had been drawn, by which Christianity succeeded to the rich heritage of the classical and Hebrew world.

When a Vicar of the unseen society and an Emperor of the seen are associated and accepted as supreme over the Western world, we discover at a glance the forces governing humanity on their two sides. On the one side we have the soliciting,

ethical force adjusting the relations of man with man. On the other side the soliciting spiritual force calling for correspondence with Christ in the godhead of the heavens. Further, we see the radical relation of the two sides, the spiritual as superior inasmuch as the Emperor is consecrated by the vicar of heaven. Here is the meaning of the Papal vicariousness. The Pope is really a symbol of the social forces which Christ carried into the spiritual universe, which were urging the human faculty into the orbit of responsiveness. And he is the symbol because the spiritual perceptions of the Middle Age are in an enfeebled condition, and need sensuous assistance for access to Christ which in a wholesome condition of vigour is not needed. Direct access without a priestly mediation was the ideal recovered at the Reformation, and is the heart of the revolution which changed the whole face of Western society. The Reformation is badly named; it should be named the great Revival, the spiritual Renascence.

Now Mr. Bryce does not mention the name of Christ in his whole book, nor the social forces located in His person and communicated to men. This, the central truth of the Middle Age, is left in the cloudy generality of the words, religion and the religious life. To boycot this superior force working in the Middle Age in historical literature is to lose proportion and perspective in history. Atmosphere is wanting. A vapour from the fen will creep over the landscape. Plato long ago

said, "The state can only be stable which is planned by artists who make use of the heavenly pattern."[1] The heavenly pattern in this last stage of evolution is obtained from Christ, and we shall not understand the social economy of the Western nations, nor its history without it. It must be treated in detail and placed in the forefront, cause and effect, force and the work done, and the society of the forces, and the parties to the society.

The Middle Age so squarely set, after some necessary friction between the spiritual and secular powers, and later adjustment, flowered into Art, making a marked, pathetic, engaging evolution, succeeding ages of stress and strain, so original that nothing like it has appeared again. On the fallow soil of the Middle Age, the garden of the Renaissance flowered. This Art is wholly concerned in making beautiful the social forces,—their solar and secular correspondence,—working for 1300 years among the Western peoples. Mere genius had never produced this Art, it was genius which had experience of these forces, leading the mute millions who were under the same dominion. The subject of this Art is the Annunciation, the Madonna, the Nativity, the Baptism, the Last Supper and the Crucifixion, the two last in abundance, the Resurrection, and saints, mystics, martyrs under the spell of these events. These Masters saw the ideal and the

[1] *Republic*, Book vi. Jowett's *Plato*, vol. iii. p. 387.

infinite in these scenes; the love, the awe, the hope and the revealing mystery in them, which they made beautiful. The inspiration of fine art is the beauty seen in the truth of things. This Art spoke a language, in the epic of line and lyric of colour, common among the Western peoples, made beautiful the experiences common and current amongst them, easily understood that day and understood as easily this day.

For near 300 years, from Cimabue and Giotto to Raphael and Cellini, we have a long succession of seeing men and feeling hearts, inspired by the sense of the beautiful which they perceived in the forces working for a thousand years. Giotto, Fra Angelico, Donatello, Perugino, Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo, Raphael, and their schools, have filled not only the Galleries of Italy, but the Art collections of all Europe with the æsthetics of this inspiration. Fresco, mosaic, relief, painting, terra-cotta, marble,—every material, which the technique of the inspired beauty could subdue, was used to give expression to the perceived truth and beauty in the person of Christ and the forces He took with Him into the unseen, which were communicated to longing souls, and who responded to them. The Art remains for all ages. It is there for us ever to see the vision of the true, the fair, the good in the forces which have guided the evolution of Western civilisation. An unfathomable something is in this Art, something in the curves, tones, values, which tells us there is

looming in the vision of the artist more than he is capable of telling. Enough is told, but in that enough the artist is striving after the inexpressible, the forces he is showing have the infinite in them. He is awake, but whiles drops into dreaming. The Art is implicit with allusion, suggestion, promise; explicit with the forces that compact the Middle Age. Art and poetry give us a sense of the whole, theology is particular to an age, so is science, so is philosophy. Reason brings us particulars, and particularises us, and we see in part.

We who have seen the Madonna delle Arpie of Andrea del Sarto in the Uffizi Gallery of Florence have felt the pensive beauty, the dreaming mysticism, the revealing mystery, the hope in the distance lying in human nature which the Incarnation had suggested, pictured in that face. When we reflect on the miserable feuds of the time, the poverty of the masses, the villenage next door to slavery, the servile piety of priest and monk, the parasitic conditions, the prevailing epidemics, it is wonderful that the underlying forces should have been perceived instinct with such beauty. The human darkness was lost in golden lights; the earthly present in the eternal radiance, the irrational in our world in the reason of worlds to be. It is a romance of the unexpected and surprising. The marvellous frescoes of the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella and the cloisters of San Marco and the terra-cottas of

della Robbia in the Bargello, all in Florence, are only a copy of what the artist found frescoed in his own soul and in the souls of men for 1300 years, of forces emanating from the glorified Person of Christ and received by the human faculty organising a social economy, which this day we perceive had the future.

Recently was published *The Cambridge Modern History*, planned by the late Lord Acton, and edited by distinguished scholars. The first volume is entitled, "The Renaissance."[1] It is almost incredible that in a history which comes to us with such authority and devoted to the Renaissance there is no treatment of the art of the Renaissance. A distressing excuse is made for the inexecusable omission, that there is no room.[2] There should have been room for nothing else,

[1] *The Cambridge Modern History.* Planned by the late Lord Acton, LL.D., Regius Professor of Modern History; edited by A. W. Ward, Litt.D., G. W. Prothero, Litt.D., and Stanley Leathes, M.A. Vol. i. The Renaissance, Cambridge University Press.

[2] The *Times* reviewer of *The Cambridge Modern History* urges: "Here we may remark upon the one conspicuous omission of the book. Among all human activities Art alone finds no special place in it, the editors' excuse being that to have included it would have demanded a too great extension of their space. We cannot admit the justice of the plea; to nine cultivated persons out of ten the name of "the Renaissance" suggests Art: and to omit it altogether from a history of Europe during the Renaissance is to omit that one among the legacies of the Renaissance which is most valued, and which, by the nature of the case, has come down to us least changed by time." (Nov. 1, 1902.)

if the historian is to discriminate between the essential and the extraneous. This Art, scattered over all Europe, centred in the churches, chapels, cloisters, galleries, museums of Florence and Rome, gives the age its meaning, distinction, place, is the revealing literature of the working forces. It collects the past into a charming focus, and is a sure index to the expanding drama of the coming age. It is a fascinating avenue into the Western civilisation of to-day, and the underlying forces of it.

We do not canvass the motive of this gaping blank. No inferior motive has a place, such kind is not here. It is a habit of literature, a fashion of the time, an evil tradition, now happily on the wane. We ask rather a revision of this whole method of writing history which gives no place to the central forces. We ask this revision the rather that to keep them in the background is like writing the astronomy of the annual passage of the earth through space without mention of the sun, and the response to solar forces.

The idea that every nation has a genius differing from every other, the principle of nationality; the idea that the individual cannot be merged into the society to which he belongs, the principle of individuality; the revival of classical literature, the study of the theology of other days, the discovery of America, the passage of the Cape, the Portuguese and Spanish conquests,

a hazy notion of religious toleration,—these with the containing political and economic changes which came to the front are learnedly and lucidly presented to us in the *Cambridge History*. But they are not of the centre, they are radiations from the centre, valuable accessory forces. One of the tasks for the scientific historian is to relate these radiations and accessories to the centre. In the centre, what we see, is the extended frontier of consciousness by a finer access into the spiritual universe. All else are pendants of this projection. In the later Reformation the frontier was still further extended, and larger acquaintance made of the spiritual universe.

Columbus made the physical discovery of America, a stirring exploit, but it was the fleet of Puritans who sailed from the English shore that made the real America. In Giotto, Fra Angelico, Raphael, and their schools, we find the inspiring forces of the Renaissance figured for us in their frescoes and paintings of the annunciation, the nativity, the baptism, the crucifixion, the resurrection. The Renaissance is Giotto, it is Fra Angelico, it is Raphael. Erasmus was the light of the new learning at the Renaissance period, but as Mr. Morley says, "the Reformation is Luther; it is Calvin."

CHAPTER IV

IMPERIAL FORCES IN WESTERN CIVILISATION

(*continued*)

We come in our survey to the first centuries in which freshened forces were released into the evolutionary process which carried the ancient world into the modern, which gathered up all the enduring elements of ancient civilisations and gave them a new lease of life. Here we meet Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* This history has been ageing this while, and may perhaps be now spoken of as antiquated, its unquestioned excellence notwithstanding. But Gibbon's method of putting effects for causes and the work done for forces doing the work is not antiquated. Mr. Bryce, in his classic of the Middle Age, recounted to us the light in which historians read the Reformation. One as a revolt of the laity against the clergy, another as a revolt of the Teutonic races against the Latin, a third as a revolt of the kings of Europe against the

monarchy of the Pope, again as a burst of anger at ecclesiastical abuses, and once again a renewal of the primitive doctrines of the church. All effects, not causes; facts without factors. This is Gibbon over again.

Mr. Bryce refuses to see the essence in these accounts. "It was in its essence the assertion of the principle of individuality—that is to say of true spiritual freedom." A principle may mean a force, or the work done by a force, or an abstraction which includes both. The masterful force in this movement is the glorified person of Christ, the answering force is the correspondence without the mediation of priest or pope, and with a minimum of assistance from ceremony. The resulting fact is a freshened harmony which makes the individuality known as Evangelical. Everything else — revolts and outbursts and reactions — are subsidiary results, minor effects, offshoots, and a strong stem will throw out many offshoots. Like the historians he thrusts aside, Mr. Bryce finds the essence of the Reformation in one of its products. If by individuality is meant that men craved to be left alone in their communion with Christ, to come into direct communication, without priestly mediation or sacramental virtues, that would be to hit the mark. But Christ and communion with him are not once alluded to in this history of research and learning.

It was Gibbon who may be said to have made this bad method of writing history good form.

It is good of its kind, if we know where we are, that the historian is speaking of effects and not factors, but it is essentially misleading. Gibbon assigns five causes for the success of Christianity in the Roman world, the passion in the Christian temper, the doctrine of immortality, the claim to miraculous power, the pure life of Christians, the cohesion of the Christian society. Any one can see that these are effects; to save face they are called secondary causes. A manner of life is behind these facts, and forces behind life. We have a word for Gibbon. History as a science was only just coming on the horizon in his day. Even now, when we are talking much about history as a science, it is said that scientific history seeks the discovery of facts. It is not so, it seeks first the discovery of the forces which shape facts. The shape facts take can be seen straight and square when we have the shaping forces. The uncritical habit of worrying effects to do duty for causation, and the work done for the forces which do work is as rife as ever. It was Gibbon's legacy, excusable in him. But it is finding the cause of the rain in the rainbow, the forces that make winter in the aurora. Never, in this wise, can the darkness of the past be lighted up.

Eusebius writes that Constantine told him that he and his army had once seen a cross in the sky, inscribed, "By this, conquer," and that before the decisive battle of the Milvian Bridge Christ had appeared to him at night. Gibbon discusses, with

his usual good sense, the trivial question of the credibility of Eusebius and this vision, which is neither here nor there. A Roman Emperor, heir to the proud tradition of the Cæsars, who had conquered and exploited the then known world, discovers on the battlefield that the death of a Person crucified in Jerusalem contains a power greater than that of his legions, accepts this unseen force and commends it to the empire. Save he had first seen the vision within him, intellectually or spiritually, by the positive pressure of the power, which pressure has been the experience of millions for centuries since, the outward sign had been a phantasm which had soon gone the way of all phantasms. The inward impact of a propelling force was the reality, the outward, however you explain it, is the shadow cast of it on the screen of nature. That day began the second decisive epoch of the forces of the modern world. The day of Pentecost was the first, the vision of Constantine was the second, the coronation of Charles the third, the Renaissance the fourth, the Reformation the fifth, Puritanism the sixth, in every one of which the same social forces, imperial and local, are working on differing conditions and qualities of responding human nature, summoning differing types of life. So the evolutionist accounts for the centuries.

But our historians see the cause of the autumn fruit only in air and water, and the cause of the cornfield in the plough, harrow, furrow, drill, and

from the nature of things we have the great affliction of history. History has had bad measure from historians. Mr. Kidd urges: "Despite the advances which have recently been made in Germany and England historical science is still a department of knowledge, almost without generalisations of the nature of laws."[1]

The late Max Müller is the sympathetic and scholarly historian of the religions and civilisations of all nations, and he has followed up the sources of them into Egypt and Accadia, the Vedas of India and the Avesta of Persia. He has discovered the human forces in religion to be the yearning of the soul to enter into union with God, and in death to return to Him from Whom it was broken off when it came here. He recognises, as we all do, this truth as the cream of mysticism. He traces this mystic vein into the ancient literature of Babylon, India, Persia; and through Plato and the Stoics and John's Gospel and Paul and the Neo-Platonists, Dionysius the Areopagite and St. Bernard, St. Teresa, Tauler, Ruysbroeck, and the Cambridge Platonists. He expresses it, in its English stage, in the words of Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist.

> I came from God; am an immortal ray
> Of God; O joy! and back to God shall go.

The Professor affirms that the most perfect

[1] *Social Evolution*, p. 28.

expression of this mysticism is Christianity. It is so, but how he does not explain.

He has given to historians an historical riddle for which he says no key has till now been found, but suggests a search for it in Alexandria. "What interests the historian is to understand how the belief of a small brotherhood of Galilean fishermen and their devotion to their Master could have influenced, as they did, the religious beliefs and convictions of the whole of the ancient world. The key to that riddle should be sought for, I believe, at Alexandria rather than in Jerusalem." [1] Professor Harnack of Berlin presents us with a similar riddle from a period four hundred years later. He asks of us, he says of Neo-Platonism: "Why Neo-Platonism succumbed in the conflict with Christianity is a question which historians have never satisfactorily answered." Our historians say that Neo-Platonism is essentially a mysticism, which we are told is the heart of all religion. Only let us understand what we mean by mysticism, for every dream and vagary of religion has been sheltered under that name. Historians include in that word the sense of our high origin in God, the longing for union with Him, the practice of communion with Him, and the assurance that we shall return to Him when the mortal bars are taken away.

It goes without saying that Christianity has these same contents and something more, which

[1] Gifford Lectures, *Psychological Religion*, p. xiv.

has made it the successor to the religions of the Western nations and to Neo-Platonism in particular. For the birth of a freshened evolution we want a freshened causation. The exciting cause of ancient mysticism is the pressure of the Infinite God upon the soul calling for correspondence. The exciting cause of Christian mysticism —using that word for the heart of religion—is the pressure of Christ crucified and risen, discovered in the Godhead, added to that of the Infinite. The unlettered Galilean fishermen found after the disappearance of Christ from this mortal scene, that He became their Correspondent, a startling enough thing, if for nothing else for its daring originality, and they became, from the law of the call, missionaries of this innovation and eloquent with it. They heard His call and answered to the summons of it; He heard theirs. They announced this wireless telegraphy, and the human capacity had been developed to receive this new order of message; and we must always remember that Christianity is receivable only by an augmented human capacity. This specific responsiveness became slowly the common experience of races and peoples, and the Christian order of life reposes upon it this day. This more capable mysticism assimilated the ruder mysticism of Neo-Platonism and Stoicism, and the beliefs and convictions of the ancient world of philosopher and peasant, and carried them forward.

There are no riddles here but evolution. Place, either in Jerusalem or Alexandria, is nowhere. The key was in the hands of capable souls in Jerusalem, Alexandria, Athens, Rome, which opened the wards of the inner gates of the unseen which led into communion with Christ. It has happened what Christ said to the woman of Samaria, and what is said to us this day, Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. Christ has become a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

Twelve Galilean fishermen brought the modern world out of the ancient by the discovery of a freshened fellowship with the Spiritual world. This capacity was developed in them out of the general capacity for religion, and it broke out everywhere, after it was announced that He Who was crucified had passed into the unseen, as if it were a memory of the Eternal, a pre-adjusted harmony which had come with mind and was waiting for the impact of His presence in the unseen, to awake into activity. This correspondence specialised the character of the Western man, and the evolution of the social economy of the Western world. It is in full operation to this hour, and we can study it and not mistake it for one moment. The marvel of this later correspondence, introduced into the earlier, excels the earlier marvel. The

unseen has now become so open, so easy of access, so gentle in its majesty, so persuasive. Every miracle pales before this, and it is only familiarity that blunts its edge. We have only to think of the places of worship in every parish of all Europe, and of the daily common office of prayer and hymn, to awake to it. The healing of a leper may be done by suggestion as the psychists tell us nowadays; speaking to the risen Lord in the heavens can only be accomplished by a specialised spiritual faculty, evolved in these later days.

Mysticism is the word which we have recovered from the dream, the trance, the rapture state. We apply it to the experienced fellowship with the Spiritual in the universe. When so used it exhibits the root idea and bed rock of all religion. It has degrees of activity, from the passion of Paul and Luther to the level of the everyday man. At every level it preserves the essential feature of affinity with the Spiritual as the hall-mark of religion. The word may come from the Greek word which means to close the eye or lip. It does speak of the silence which hears voices from our native country, for we are not natives here. It does speak of the look inward into the abyss of being, as when the Hebrew seer saw "the King in His beauty and the land that was very far off." Mysticism may be derived from the initiation into the mysteries practised by the Greeks. Religion always requires an initiation, a baptism, an induction. If we had no society to

reckon with in the supernatural, there had been no religion in the world. If we had no society with Christ in the supernatural, there had been no Christianity in the Western world. Mysticism expresses this society.

CHAPTER V

STRIKING THE TRUE VEIN

It is necessary to relieve this picture, and I will bring into relief two histories of mark, which strike the true vein but do not go deep enough. Mr. Lecky has given us a masterly book on the history of European morals from Augustus to Charlemagne, possessed of those qualities which give distinction and authority. In his wide research and survey he traces the evolution of European morals wholly to the influences which Christianity infused into the period of time. Just here the shortage occurs. In two volumes of 900 pages he devotes perhaps six or eight pages to the operating Cause and causes, and this in running passages, though of striking force and beauty, which makes the shrinkage the more regrettable. European morals are phenomenal, for in the evolutionary line, nothing like the Western social economy has a parallel. But it is an effect. We sigh, though now in vain, that a hundred pages have not been devoted to the forces which live in the effects and we do not

strain when we say that the vivid contrasts and comparisons which he has drawn with so much colour have not been adequately traced to working forces.

Mr. Lecky urges, going into the heart of the matter: "The first aspect in which Christianity presented itself to the world was a declaration of the fraternity of men in Christ,"[1] from which developed the "eminently Christian idea of the sanctity of all human life."[2] At the same time our author remarks, "The stoical philosophy recognised from the very first and in the most unequivocal manner the fraternity of mankind."[3] The crucial point is, what differentiated the fraternity seen in Christ from that seen by the Stoics, who had reached the highest height of ancient civilisation? If human equality, as a mere moral principle, was the cause, why did it not succeed in the hands of the Stoics, who had held the field for centuries before Christianity, and who justly commanded the respect of society by their high excellence of character? On their side all the social forces of civilisation had been working even after Christianity had come in. Why did Stoicism go down and give place to Christianity? Here is the problem.

Mr. Lecky does differentiate, and comes nearer to the heart of the conquering cause, and then stops short. He affirms, "The Platonist exhorted men to imitate God, the Stoic to follow reason,

[1] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. p. 17.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 18. [3] *Ibid.* p. 239.

the Christian to the love of Christ."[1] Again, Christianity effected a complete revolution by "making the love of Christ rather than the love of man the principle of charity."[2] This only shifts the problem a little farther without reaching the goal. Why and how should the love of Christ have had an ethical efficacy which the love of other great and good men had not, who had been recommended by the Stoics? Socrates had died a truly martyr's death in the interests of progress and left a profound impression, and there is not a more moving picture of altruistic grandeur than the scene which Plato has drawn of the philosopher's execution in the last pages of the *Phædo*. The memory of Socrates must always have been an availing ethical asset, but it did not move the morals of the world out of the groove in which it was going.

Greek civilisation passed its best elements to the Roman race, but did not save itself from wasting out. Julius Cæsar was a typical Roman and perished because of his greatness, and his blood stirred the empire to its depths. He was deified, and the ruinous lofty podium of the Temple dedicated to the worship of him has been recently uncovered, and may be now seen in the Roman Forum, while the remains of another Temple dedicated to Mars Ultor, the Avenger, are also to be seen, which sanctified his memory.

[1] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. p. 8.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 79.

Germanicus was another typical Roman, so dear to the people that his premature death excited an anger at the irrationality of the universe, and the people stoned the statues and broke down the altars of the gods. But the love of Julius Cæsar and the memory of Germanicus did not initiate a new type of altruism and shunt Roman civilisation on to new lines. All that was enduring in it was picked up out of the decay into which it fell, and the selection was made by the regeneration in the love of Christ. The central problem of civilisation returns upon us, and we ask what differentiated this love from other human loves apparently as forceful.

Mr. Lecky has failed to unfold this historic problem, not from want of insight or grasp of thought, but following stale custom, with the dead hand upon him. It was in him to do it, and it belonged to his subject, and very illuminating would these hundred pages have been to an age on which the sorrow of the world has become a deepening gloom and the despair of history. The secret of this evolutionary force of the first order is easily read. It was the love of One who was seen as the primal Ideal of the creation in a sinless Man, in antique language, the First-born of every creature with a Divinity in Him which gave Him the primogeniture, who sacrificed Himself in the great struggle appointed to all living. Correspondence with Him supplied the new altruism. In His specialised Person and

earthly service there lay the specific forcefulness of this love in the drama of Western civilisation. He is the Cause; all else is outcome.

Mr. Kidd has given us two unique books on the underlying forces which have been working out our modern civilisation. He has poured a stream of lustrous thought on the causes which have gone to the making of it, which causes still endure, pushing it forward into large issues. He urges: "The new force which was born into the world with the Christian religion was, evidently, from the very first, of immeasurable social significance."[1] Again, "The motive force which has been behind this development has its seat in that fund of altruistic feeling with which our civilisation has become equipped, and that this fund of altruistic feeling has been the characteristic product of the religious system (the Christian) associated with our civilisation."[2] The birth of the new force and resulting altruism are put in eloquent, but brief and general terms. They were found in "a close and intimate contact with those wonderfully moving and impressive altruistic ideals which we have in the simple story of the life and acts of the Founder of Christianity."[3] This is so far good, but it is a generality which skims the surface. This is the one, sole reference in this book to Christ, whom Mr. Kidd regards as the author and inspiration of Western civilisation.

[1] *Social Evolution*, p. 135, edition, 1896.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 261.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 321.

For purposes of history and science, this solitary reference is shadowy and surely disproportioned. The working, urging, producing Cause demands larger handling than a single sentence bestowed on it. Mr. Kidd has excited the expectation of this large handling.

In his more recent work on the *Principles of Western Civilisation*, he develops with singular insight and freshness another "distinguishing characteristic of the Christian religion," which has gone to the making of Western civilisation. He puts it in his best style. "The equilibrium between the individual and his surroundings, between the individual and his interests, between the individual and his own nature, has been absolutely annihilated."[1] In more popular language this means that men came to be possessed with the profound assurance that they had interests which transcended the bounds of their few years and linked themselves with interests which they would find in death; that they were immortal beings who will encounter these interests in another existence, that they were unfinished creatures to be fulfilled in another sphere, that here they were qualifying for the harmony of these larger interests. The human relations and interests are projected into the future with a new emphasis and vividness, henceforth to be a dominating factor in the evolution given to the Western peoples. The point is that the individual and

[1] *Principles of Western Civilisation*, p. 214.

society are used up for far-off interests, and that the dominion of this sacrificial principle is the product of the Christian religion. This is Mr. Kidd's line.

In this now omnipotent factor we understand "the interval which has begun to separate us from the standards of the ancient civilisation." [1] In it, we see "the terms of an evolutionary problem of the first order," [2] "the ascendancy of the influence of the new system of religious belief." [3] Here we see "the rising of the individual consciousness into the cosmic." [4] Through this cosmic consciousness "have been unloosed forces destined never again to be bound." [5] "We are living in the midst of a system of things by the side of which no other system will in the end survive as a rival in the world." [6]

Evolutionary history has never seen so far. Mr. Kidd has touched the deeps, and in the promise of books yet to come, we hope he will sound the deeps. Meanwhile we note the shortage. The phrases oft repeated, the Christian religion, the new system of religious belief, and such like, leave everything unsaid. Religion is the product of social forces; it is a large effect, which lives in forces. Religious belief is only the literary expression of experiences wrought by forces. Unloosed forces come from a propelling force

[1] *Principles of Western Civilisation*, p. 217.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 203. [3] *Ibid.* p. 205. [4] *Ibid.* p. 218.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 237. [6] *Ibid.* p. 340.

behind them. As in his former work, so in the later, in 500 pages, he has one or two solitary references to the Force which brought to the birth the Christian religion and Christian beliefs. It is spoken to as "associated with the work of the Founder of Christianity."[1] The projection of human interests in the future is an outcome, on which Mr. Kidd dilates with effect. The outlay is found in one or two brief and incidental sentences about the Founder of Christianity.

It is no recondite hidden force which expanded the human horizon and visioned interests projected beyond death, and shifted the controlling centre of the historic process, and inserted "the stupendous system of other-worldliness" into our civilisation. The Cause is well defined and definite, and historians are always suggesting it, but never come into close contact with it. There are rivers whose sources can only be traced to glaciers and mountain recesses very difficult to reach. There are rivers which flow out of lakes easily reached. The human fraternity in Christ came from the appearance of Christ in the flesh; the altruistic ideals came from the service of the crucifixion; immortality and the service of another world from the resurrection presence of Christ in the unseen. The love of Christ unseen and glorified, but known and felt and communicated with, is the summed-up affection proceeding from these forces. The river flows out of a lake

[1] *Principles of Western Civilisation*, p. 221.

country which has all the beauty of lake scenery, and is begirt by mountain ranges which send their awe and mystery to it.

Mr. Lecky and Mr. Kidd are within measurable distance of the elemental forces on which religion reposes, and those same forces, intensified and amplified, on which Christianity reposes. The distance is overtaken, and proportion and perspective found for history and science only by a detailed treatment of the great, causal, evolutionary Force, in some such order. (1) The person and place of Christ on the stage of His earthly life. (2) The person and place of Christ in the unseen, environing and urging the human faculty into correspondence. (3) The human faculty in response and the phenomena of responsiveness. (4) The specific forces from the life and death and rising again collected in the soliciting Person of Christ in the unseen, and communicated to the human faculty inspiring the cosmic consciousness and the altruistic ideals, projected into the drama of Western civilisation. (5) It will honour the new evolutionary science if ancient civilisations are shown caught in the toils of these forces passing their permanent elements to their natural heir.

Mr. Kidd's argument, novel and true for historic science, emphasises the law of altruistic sacrifice, supreme in human affairs, in leash in the old civilisation, unloosed in our Western civilisation. We are here to be sacrificed to interests,

partly our own, mostly far off, partly for unborn generations and mostly beyond the bounds of time. Now what has made this universal law operative in these latter days is the death of Christ glorified by His rising again, radiating out towards us from the heavens. These are the forces which history cannot afford to be silent about, and must dilate upon.

We have learnt with an emphasis beyond the common in this era of time how little we are in our hands, how much in the hands of Another who is greater than we, and how good that it is so. In the come and go of the years we are caught in the toils of duty, pleasure, business, love, home, and hedged in, and we make a living or something more, held in by routine and custom. It has dawned upon us that in this everydayness we are in service, that what we are and what we are gaining and losing are going for service. We are being used up in the service of the large universe, whether we will or not; we are being sacrificed for interests beyond our ken, whether we like it or not; and sacrifice is a high-class service. Altruism is service for others, other worldliness is service for another world for interests partly our own and here, mostly for others and elsewhere.

The needs of fact and the sense of history require that we trace this outlook to its sources in Christ. A landscape of widened interests inside and outside the limits of time now opens out. It charges life with meaning to its least word.

CHAPTER VI

RESPONSIVENESS TO CHRIST A SUPREME FUNCTION IN THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

We have now arrived at the royal factor, quite luminous, that the impelling pressure of Jesus Christ in the universe of spirit started Western civilisation on its career, and that the social economy of the European peoples has been slowly organised, alongside of reversion and reverse, which invariably consort with evolution, by responsiveness to this high born pressure. Throughout these twenty centuries these two forces, one from above, the other from below, so to speak, are wholly in possession of the European ground, and make history. Before we pronounce on the details of these sceptred forces and the work they have done and are doing, we shall look back a little and recall the impressions we have taken. Our analysis will then bring us to the Three Greatest Forces in our world, towards which we have been travelling, which have given

character to Western civilisation, and quality and grade of quality to it.

The worship of Christ is the unique, massive force in the evolutionary process which put the Western peoples on the lines they have moved these 2000 years, and made destiny for them. Worship has one meaning, whichever way you look at it. It is the intercourse of forces, and the worship of Christ means the response of the human soul to the drawing of Christ in the unseen. It may be said, in sober sooth, that all that is distinctive of this period of time is in this, that the human soul has gone directly into the invisible world and discovered Christ there, and established relations with Him, has brought to Him the burden and joy of being, the sin and gloom of the years, the beauty and aspiring of love, and found new meanings in life and a wide horizon. The capacity for this discovery and the fact of the relation, are the ground and reason for Christianity. The presence of the unseen Christ in the human consciousness is the secret of it.

He said before He took His place above that this worship is what was going to happen. "I will not leave you alone, I will come to you; a little while and ye shall see me: and again a little while, and ye shall not see me, because I go to the Father; it is to your advantage that I go away. Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." This engaging idea is repeated over

and over. Life has a sympathy with summer, and it is in the summer of Christ's presence in the paternal home that the modern world found its beginning and growth and history. This intercourse is enshrined in the heart of the modern world, without which any reading of Western civilisation can only be the reading of a language half understood. This worship is an evolutionary force of the first rank.

Biology affirms for life the presence of two constants, first a plasma of what may be called living molecules contained in the seed or the egg; and second, an environment which awakens the sleeping life, to which the forceful plasma is obedient. Psychology is a counterpart of physiology. The plasma of mind is the beginning and basis of the religious life, and it is no other than intuitions, the constant tendencies with which mind begins its career. In the human infant, the contents of a future metaphysics are folded as a rosebud, and in a year or two the most metaphysical part of it unfolds in a language spoken without tuition in case endings and tense inflexions, by the action of the surrounding human mind. Shortly after, the fears, the dependence, the outlook, the conscience of right and wrong, the stir of being and death and the hereafter, all involved in the mind content, are set in motion but now by the subtle brooding of the besetting Spirit of God. In these latter days the added environment, supplied through the Person of

Christ passed into the Godhead, organises the more complex life of the Christian world.

When Mr. Herbert Spencer writes that of all certainties the most certain is that we are in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal energy from which all things proceed, he has been in correspondence with the Almighty Spirit. When Cowper hymns, "Jesus, where'er Thy people meet, There they behold Thy mercy seat"; and Ray Palmer, "I see Thee not, I hear Thee not, yet art Thou oft with me"; and Keble, "Sun of my Soul, Thou Saviour dear," they are in correspondence with Christ. Common speech is the first wonder in our being, by which we answer one another; the speech of religion, God speaking to us and we answering is the second great wonder; the speech of Christianity, Christ speaking to us and we answering Him, is the latest wonder, excelling all wonders. This commerce has developed an unexpected content in the human faculty, rearranging the man and constructing a social economy quite unique. It furnished the martyr fibre and the missionary passion, it produced the new love for the wonder, the mystery, the far off in our human nature. It inspired the beauty of the Renaissance and the puissance of the Reformation and the force in all the great figures in Western history.

At this point, a clear understanding of the social forces requires that we draw a distinction between the local and the imperial forces which

impinge on all life. The sown seed first does business only with the local of soil and water, in the womb of mother earth. As the plumule or embryo starts, commerce is opened with the sun also, and in this twofold correspondence are the matured relations of the plant. Forces of life sleep in the germ closed in a cover, they expand and break the cover by virtues from the forces of earth; this wakened life then becomes social with the sun. We have thus secular and solar forces acting upon the native force, lodged in the germ. The administration of mind is on a parallel line, in the evolution of religion. Love in the family, teaching at home, church life around, the sight of death, the sense of right and wrong—these soon intercede with the boy to develop the religion in him. Literature, example, tradition, custom, institution help on the evolution. These are forces of the local kind. The imperial force, without which the local will fail us, is the overshadowing Infinite and Eternal, and latterly, the persuasive presence of Christ, Who was dead and is alive again. Into this temple of worship, evolutionary science conducts us, with its sure guiding hand, there to find the constructive forces of Western civilisation.

Matthew Arnold once said that he was going to keep Christmas Day because the incarnation was a myth of purity, refining to the family life. Martineau took the spiritual ground that the incarnation was a myth of the truth which

humanised God and relieved man of the intolerable burden of a stupendous universe. A myth is a picturesque literary setting to a discovery made by the social forces of religion; ritual is a symbolic setting; a festival is a dramatic setting. The discovery of the divinity of Christ in heaven was the work done by society with Christ. Myth, symbol, ritual come under the class of the local forces which assist in the making of religion, and as we have observed they are without avail, wanting the imperial force. The biological distinction between the solar and secular agencies by which life is ruled would have corrected the refraction in the poetic thought of Arnold and the philosophic thought of Martineau.

It is instructive to hear lectures on the sun by an astronomer, and on light and heat by a professor of physics. But the sun is not a system of teaching or a manual of physics, but an energy, rather a system of forces, which marshals plant and animal life. The sunrise and sunset have inspired charming myths and symbols, but in science the sun is the director of physiology. The cuckoo crying its own name in the wood, the odour of the May blossom, the sheep pasturing on the moor, the yellowing of the autumn leaf, all related to the sun, have thrilled the poetry in us; but life is a system of cell and function administered by the sun.

The religious life has been the theme of the

epic and the lyric from the days of Homer and David and Virgil to Milton, Wesley, Lyte, and Bonar. It has been brought into the lecture-room from the days of Job and Confucius and Plato to the divinity halls of Chalmers and Lightfoot. But it is, first of all, a system of faculty, emotion, conduct, in response to a specific pressure of the spiritual universe. It is instructive to hear Mr. Spencer telling us of the Infinite and Eternal energy from which all things proceed; but if this august Energy had not pressed upon the mind of the philosopher he had not discovered it or discoursed so lucidly about it, nor had there been religion anywhere, without a response to this pressure. It is illuminating to hear lectures in a divinity school on the person of Christ, but Christ is before all the correspondent in the heavens of the human mind, without Whom there had been no European civilisation.

The two classes of environing solicitude, variously styled, proximate and ultimate, local and imperial, secular and solar, must be seen carefully, and distinguished anxiously, and their joint action accurately marked, in order to understand the social forces directing our affairs. The worship of Christ has been found by evolutionary history to be a force of the first magnitude in constructing the economics of the Western nations. The biologist who studies life, the historian who connects age with age by living forces, the evolutionist who sees human life in stages, the

economist who finds cause for social progress, the philosopher who seeks values—one and all must put on the salient foreground or the looming horizon the one imperial force which has gathered the forces of the past into a new order and rearranged the civilisation of the Western nations. They must come alongside of the theologian and preacher in the matter of worship.

Responsiveness to Christ reduces Christianity to its simplest terms, brings it into its nucleated essence. It is the axis on which revolves all the phenomena of modern history, both as evolution and reversion, progress or regress. Responsiveness means two things, that the local and imperial universe, earth and heaven, have business with each other, and that in this business work is done for the individual man and the social economy. Responsiveness to Christ has been a large invasion into farther recesses of the spiritual universe; the presence of Christ there has allowed us a large business. It was the remoteness of this place of imperial business which made the rudeness of all the religions of the world which preceded Christianity, which excited the ritualism which pervades them. Let what will be subtracted from the social order, responsiveness to Christ remains as its magnetic pole. Extract responsiveness to Christ out of our social order, and at best we revert to Hebraism or Hellenism, Mahomedanism or Buddhism.

The ethics of Buddha and Confucius is as high

pitched as that of Christ. The morals of Stoicism was also on a high key. The distinction of Christianity is not in its mere morals. It is morals obtained in the medium of responsiveness to Christ. The worship of Christ gives a special character to the Western nations, and the originality of the social system,—in morals, legislation, politics, philanthropy,—is the product of it.

CHAPTER VII

RESPONSIVENESS TO CHRIST IN WESTERN HISTORY

We must lay an emphasis on the supreme fact that Western civilisation from its inception passed under the control of this responsiveness. The history of Europe is the story to this hour of the ideals which this responsiveness had introduced. Every epoch is the poise which this correspondence had composed: every revolution was the disturbance of this poise. In this twentieth century the quality of this correspondence with Christ divides the Western peoples in degrees of efficiency and determines their place among the nations.

The primitive quality of this responsiveness is not far to seek. It has one resounding character, which he who runs may read. That character is a homely direct access into the sanctuary of the Infinite and to Jesus Christ now in this sanctuary, without the intervention of priest and the sanction of a pope. In primitive religions, the space between the two universes which the religious faculty must traverse is crowded with

priests, rites, sacrifices, images. The old religions laboured ritualisms. The road is long and rugged, and the air is cloudy, and to the credit of human nature it must be said that early man spared no labour to find for his religious faculty its proper nutriment, and struggled his way into the invisible. The labour to keep the body has always been a strain, though in this strain is the problem of progress and the sombre problem of lost civilisations. Parallel with this labour has been the strain to keep the harmony of the two worlds and ourselves spiritually alive, which makes the story of civilisation, both in its success and failure.

Says Maspero of ancient Egypt: "The incredible number of religious scenes to be found among the representations of the ancient monuments of Egypt is at first glance very striking. One would think that the country had been inhabited for the most part by gods, and contained just sufficient men and animals to satisfy the requirements of their worship."[1] Pausanias says that, "in care for divine things the Athenians outdid all other Greeks."[2] Peter speaks of the Hebrew system that it was a yoke upon the neck, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."[3] The modern Hindu is on the same plane as the ancients, and of him Mr. Herbert Spencer writes, quoting a missionary

[1] *The Dawn of Civilisation*, Egypt and Chaldea, translated by M. L. M'Clure, p. 81.

[2] Pater's *Greek Studies*, p. 163. [3] Acts xv. 10.

authority, "His love of worship is a passion, is a frenzy, is a consuming fire. It absorbs his thoughts, it influences and sways his mind on every subject."[1] It has been said of the Aryans of the time of the Vedas, that "no one could rise from his bed or wash his face, or brush his teeth, or drink a glass of water, without going through a regular system of purifications, salutations, prayers."[2]

The most obtrusive fact we meet with in the evolution of religion is the clarified way into the supernatural, and the directness of the intercourse with the unseen which were found when it passed under the control of the responsiveness to Christ. The so-called deities of Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Teutonic civilisation, which were, however, detailed and distracting traces of the divineness found in nature and man, and which were utilised as a medium of access to the High Divine,—these were unified in the Person of Christ as the First-Born of the Creation. The toilsome expiations, oblations, lustrations were unified by His death, and it was seen to be the original of the sacrificial system and the essence of it. The priestly aristocracy was dispensed with by a priestly democracy, which needed not its assistance, but transacted personally with the realm of spirit, because the Resurrection had translated Christ into the heavenly imperialism, into which admission

[1] *Ecclesiastical Institutions*, p. 821.
[2] Rajendratala Mithra on Indo-Aryanism.

had become free and welcome to every comer. The cause is as visible as the effect. It is Christ in the sanctuary above as the Correspondent of man. Man found himself alone with God, and saw no need of intermediaries of any kind. The very idea of temple was lost and the word disallowed, and there was left nothing between God and man but space and sky, lighted by sun and star. The effected progress is so complete that we have actually forgotten what the gods of Greece and Rome were, and great scholars misread them, and it would be a blank sensation to see the sacrifice of a lamb by a priest.

The history of this responsiveness as an evolutionary force controlling the civilisation of the Western races may be briefly sketched.

At its inception, society with the supernatural, without mediatories, carrying only the human passport, is the distinction of the responsiveness obtained by the worship of Christ. Spirit touches spirit and wants no assistance from sense; it is unnegotiated society. The first 300 years were centuries of storm and stress, and it was this direct correspondence which sustained the martyr church, while it was making its way through seas of blood into recognition. For another 300 years the purity of this communion was maintained by the now missionary church, when Irish monks of Lindisfarne converted England, Columba France, Benedict Italy, Boniface Germany, St. Gall Switzerland. About the end of this period, we

see the falling away from the ideal. Reversion makes chapters in evolutionary history.

> Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good
> And Reversion ever dragging evolution in the mud.

Not so; there is no muddiness in the bad sense. There is a drag down, and it is a drop on to a lower type, but the lower types have their place in the creation. "Progressive evolution has, however, not been prevented by the frequent occurrence of an opposite process; and, indeed, degeneracy of parts or of types of life, have been necessary to the advance of other and better organs and forms."[1] Reversion shows degeneration, and one kind of it is parasitism, but the moral meanings of these words will mislead us when we are thinking scientifically, moving on the lines of science.

Gregory the Great in the seventh century refused to be called universal bishop. Very soon, however, the Pope was found, evolved into a viceroy, because the weakened eye could not see clearly the unseen Christ. With him, what was inevitable, came the priest who gave absolution, a vicar who could speak to the ear, which, bereaved of its finer sensitiveness, could not hear the unspoken voice of Jesus. With pope and priest were correlated a vivid ritualism, first a feeble copy of ancient sacrifice. The bread and wine were transformed by the priest into the body and blood of Christ, and the Christ now invisible and

[1] Lankester's *Advance of Science*, p. 9.

the sacrifice now abolished, are repeated before the eye and the ear of the worshipper. Next come, like modified organs of the creature which has fallen on a lower grade, the worshipful sacredness of Mary and the saints, who as human were found more approachable than Christ in the Godhead, who were made the approaches to Him. Here was a recurrence to ethnic religions which labour the assistance of sensuous stimulus. "Degeneration may be defined as a gradual change of the structure on which the organism becomes adapted to less varied and less complex conditions of life."[1]

Parasites are nature's favourites, for there are more species of them than of the progressing species, and nature seems to have taken a deal of trouble to provide food and shelter for them, when they would not do it themselves. I use the word parasite in a strictly scientific sense. The parasite is a degenerate, but nature has preferred this lapse into an inferior type to extinction. When life cannot sustain the higher grade it is allowed to fall into the lower platform. Our own mistletoe —and there are 300 forms of mistletoe-like plants—is an interesting specimen of a parasite plant, which has given us many myths and customs of winter time, clustering round Christmastide. It grafts itself on a variety of trees, most commonly on the black poplar. The seedling sends its roots through the bark of the tree into the wood,

[1] Cope's *Factors of Organic Evolution*, p. 75.

and supplies itself with water and salts from its host. The mistletoe is only partly dependent on its host. Other parasites are wholly dependent. The dodders are creepers, which climb up on nettle and hop. Their twining stem tears itself away from the soil, and has no root and becomes white or yellow; they have no leaf, doing no business either with the sun or with the earth; they draw their whole store of food from the plants which entertain them. A strange British plant of this kind is the toothwort which grows wholly underground on the roots of the poplar and the hazel, and draws all its food from their roots. Here is reversion literally dragging evolution into the mud, but no one who has seen this plant for the first time will ever forget the sensation as he comes upon the underground stem set with leaves like white teeth, with a sharp edge, away from light and air. This is degeneration, as we see, from the loss of parts and function, and it has come about by food being found second hand, direct communications with sun and air avoided and the struggle being reduced to a minimum. Here is nature hiding life from the tempest, and adapting it to inferior conditions, when it cannot sustain the superior estate.

As we have seen, Pope Leo III. crowned Charles as Emperor on Christmas day 800. Says Mr. Bryce, that day begins modern history. Then was full-fledged the order and rule of priesthood over all Europe. The evolution of Christianity

evidences its high origin by this side issue, the lapse into retrogression. It was too high pitched for human nature long to sustain the elevation. Evolution is helped by reversion. The reversion which began the Middle Age runs an unbroken history of near 700 years. Still we are to take good note that responsiveness to Christ continues to be the controlling force. The civilisation of Europe is then ruled by an inferior quality of it. The ideal is struggling with it, asserting itself; though silenced and driven into retreats it is there. The Alpine Waldenses, Jerome of Prague, Huss, Savonarola, Wickliffe, and the Lollards, and mystic souls like Santa Teresa and Fra Angelico and Catherine of Siena of the Renaissance, had it lying in them, knowing and unknowing. All through this period there was an undercurrent of mysticism, which is essentially a puritanism.

In the Spanish chapel of the Dominican Church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence we have frescoes wonderfully fresh, and altogether unsurpassed in that city of Art. These frescoes picture the outer history and inner meaning of the whole mediæval period. It is there the historian should go if he wishes to get the inner light in this era, and Mr. Bryce has been there. If we have been there we will no longer speak of the dark Age; we will see it gleaming with many purple patches which were destined for the sunshine. The fresco on the right wall as you enter represents the Pope and Emperor as coequal powers sitting each on a

throne, the Pope receiving authority from above, the Emperor from the Pope. One detail from many, in this unique fresco, which I pick out for my purpose, is that where Dominican friars, as black and white dogs, are worrying heretics, who appear as wolves, and Thomas Aquinas the Dominican Doctor is arguing with false teachers, convincing some, confounding others, and driving others away unconvinced who stop their ears.[1]

At this time there was not a breath of rationalism. The heretics are mostly, if not wholly, they who were wishing to escape in the open air of the worship in spirit and truth, without the help of the Church, men who wished personally to transact their soul's business. That fresco is a mirror of the hidden impulses of the times towards the ideal which was reached only after a prolonged struggle. It is a teaching, to all time, of the historic truth of this craving. Till he takes with him this vibrant responsiveness in its higher and lower ideal as the nourishing force of Western progress, a historian can only be on the outside of his facts. The dimness of history is read by the radiance of this responsiveness; the soul of history is found in this correspondence. We see throughout this long period the conflict of the two ideals of responsiveness, the lower calling the higher a heresy and schism, as it is this day.

Now if we are to understand the sixteenth century, and the so-called Reformation, which we

[1] Dominican means the divine dogs, *Domini canes*.

have named Puritanism, we must know that the essence and savour of it lay in the brightening and awaking of the religious faculty for immediate, personal intercourse with Christ. The score of causes which have been assigned to account for the revolution are only ancillaries and pendants. The force, the efficient cause, was the primitive quality of correspondence with Christ. A spiritual democracy had wakened up by personal intercourse with Christ, and they resisted a theocracy of intervention between them and Christ. Beneath and behind all that Luther, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer, Latimer said and did we must read this purified responsiveness. This was the battle and this the victory, and all that followed after, the new side given to Europe and the history inaugurated,—all takes character and colour from the regenerated quality of this correspondence. It is the Regeneration of the sixteenth century. No more pithy saying is found in the literature of the period than this of Erasmus, "I laid a hen egg and Luther has hatched a game cock."

Historians would not be worrying circumstance to explain the revolt of the sixteenth century, and would arrive safely at the disintegrating cause, if they would take note that the revolution ended in a new genus of the same order of religion. The two genera have since divided between them the allegiance of the Western world. It will then be perceived at a glance that the force which underlies both types of life—the Catholic and Evan-

gelical—is differing quality of the correspondence with Christ. Luther's game cock was a genus of the same order as that which had preceded it, only it had grown wings which enabled it to soar and roam the azure of space and sky, while the older keeps trailing on the ground with flapping wings. The egg of Erasmus was the new learning which he fostered. Luther found useful elements in it, but it was not of the essence of the regeneration.

The Thirty Years' War was the fierce Western struggle to preserve the primitive quality of the Responsiveness. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer submitted to be burnt to safeguard the distinctness of the unseen which had been found in England; and Latimer said, when the fagots were lighted, that they were lighting a light that day which would light all England. It kept lighted the space between the seen and unseen, which had been going into mist. The Puritans left England for an unknown country to preserve this direct communication, and founded the Anglo-Saxon Republic on the other Atlantic shore. The Methodist revival in England was the clarifying of the space between the soul and Christ, which had become foggy with dulness and indifference. Andrew Melville told the Stuart King that there were two kings in Scotland, King Jesus and King James; and King James must not come himself or put bishop and priest between the people and King Jesus. In the quaint language of the

day he expressed a national ideal which broke into a blaze in the Covenanting revolution, which was the struggle of a spiritual democracy, which would have no sensuous interference between it and the living Christ.

In 1843, this same ideal may be seen in a more peaceful and more expressive form. One half of the clergy of Scotland threw up their livings in the State-endowed Church, and half of the people followed, by the force of this sentiment. It was felt that in the choice of a minister the people should come into direct relations with the risen Lord, and that in the presentation to livings by patrons this directness was obscured and scandalised. The Civil Courts and the State refused the abolition and modification of patronage, which was the obscuring intervention, and the Scottish Disruption took place, which has changed the whole political, civil, social life of Scotland. And here again we take note of the fact that the half of the Scottish people which remained in the State Church did not question the reality of the responsiveness, which then took the form of the headship of Christ. It did not perceive the impeding medium at the time, and tolerated patronage till better times came, which did come, thirty years later, and the air had cleared and the Ideal was seen, when it asked and received the abolition of patronage.

We can see from the place of England to-day, once led by the eight grand old Bishops sent to

the Tower, from the place of the Puritans in history, and from the place of Scotland latterly led by the Erskines, Chalmers, Candlish, Norman Macleod, what a great thing a nation can make of itself by keeping fast to the ideal responsiveness. To-day we seem to be losing the lesson of history in the sorry spectacle of the English Court of Appeal for eight months debating the spoliation of the very church in Scotland which had suffered for the principle on which now all Scotland reposes in every section of it, which has lifted her on the plane she occupies, so that the Prime Minister, the two Archbishops, the Attorney-General, the Lord Mayor are Scotchmen. Judges, like historians, find it difficult to understand the principle which to-day is called spiritual independence, and sixty years ago the headship of Christ, which are varying phrases for the ideal responsiveness which has made history, which has made and yet will make revolutions.

The position which distinguishes the Western peoples from every other has been given to them by the compelling force of the responsiveness we have been discussing. Christendom is widely divided from its nearest neighbours, Hebraism, Islamism, Buddhism by reason of this responsiveness; Christendom itself can be readily divided into two large classes, the Catholic and Evangelical —I avoid the unmeaning word protestant. The inner distinction of the two classes is in the quality or grade of the responsiveness. The indis-

tinctness, which requires the assistance of the mediating priest, haunting art, witching ritual, distinguishes the Catholic peoples. The distinctness which takes directly to the unseen marks the evangelical peoples.

Evolution classifies life as lower and higher, but not as true and false. Latin and Teutonic Christianity go into two classes, differing in the mode of correspondence, assisted or unassisted. This is an external division. The inner division is in the ascendancy of love or awe in the thought and sentiment of the people. Love makes a direct sympathetic access to Christ; awe hinders and repels. Faith is correspondence in a clear, azure sky; priestliness is correspondence in a cloudy, stormy sky.

The efficiency of the Western races in the work of the world is measured by the quality of this worship, and the grades of quality take rank from the ascendant mediating priest, or the ascendant individual being himself a priest. We compare England and Spain, North and South America, Germany and Austria, Scotland and Ireland, and we find that a high-class energy of commerce and colonising and industry is the property of the evangelical communities. The individual, taking responsibility wholly on himself by direct responsiveness, is lifted into a higher plane of social efficiency.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE GREATEST FORCES

This way we arrive at the Three Great Forces composing our civilisation, which in an ultimate analysis we shall find there, layered in work done. It ought to be carefully noted that in the traffic of social forces we have, on the one side, the force which gives and attracts by gifts; and on the other we have the force which takes and responds. Environment imparts virtues to the environed life. The sun gives light, heat, electricity, the earth air, water, soil, to all living. The receiving force will show to us the contents of the giving force.

In ancient civilisations we have seen that the controlling force came from the human response to the Infinite and Eternal, in very varying conceptions, clothed in forms familiar to us. On this base our modern civilisation rose under the control of the human response to Christ passed into the Infinite and Eternal. In this response were discovered three imparted forces which have

given quality to character and motive to conduct, and have entered into the texture of social economy. These are the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection. Response means the obedient force taking the gifts genially and conforming to the Master force.

The evolution of the Western man and his civilisation has its ground forces in the now ampler society of the natural and supernatural. From its inception, in this communion were found the three forces derived from the three events in the earthly life of Christ, which empowered Him to be our correspondent. Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was, and is, and shall be, world without end, is the anthem of communion. Each Power holds and gives specific virtues, and together they impart the affluence which gives complexity to Western civilisations. Mr. Herbert Spencer has so profoundly grasped the scheme of life below that the most primitive ideas are seen to run up into the high life of man. He urges "Whatever amount of power an organism expends is the correlate or equivalent of the power that was taken into it from without."[1] The Christian man is an organism spending the power taken into him from without; modern society is a spending organism correlated to the powers taken into it from without. The without in both cases is specifically Christ outside the range of sense;

[1] *Principles of Biology*, p. 57.

individual character and the social system are the reflection of powers received from His incoming into the flesh, His discharge from the flesh, and His return to God. Western economics have been equipped with a revenue issuing hence.

It is our purpose to discuss the particular and varied contents of this equipment. We introduce the details by some general remarks.

In appearance there is a seeming cleavage, at bottom a continuity when the Christian world broke with the ancient world. Both ages felt a contrariety so severe that they confronted each other for 300 years on the one side with a frenzied antipathy or a frozen indifference, and on the other with an unyielding resistance. When we read history by the light of evolutionary science we find that the old world was really carried forward on the bridge of continuity. The passage was made by a new cause coming into the procession. In the new order cause and effect, factor and fact, are not disputable. Correspondence with Christ, added to the old-world correspondence, is written in sunbeams as the causation in which we discover the constructive forces on which we are insisting, forces working in unison, though separable in thought. If an analogy may be permitted, it is like light, heat, electricity, issuing from the sun and imported to the earth, each producing its own effects, and yet always found together.

Science, philosophy, metaphysics, poetry, religion are dissolved through each other in the human mind.

The law of struggle, which we know as Darwinism and as the lever which has moved life from stage to stage, was anticipated by Greek thinkers, who had said that strife is the father of all things; and by Böhme, the unlearned father of German metaphysics, when he said that in Yes or No all things consist. Carlyle was a philosopher before he was a historian, and he is a few years before Darwin in his two chapters on the Everlasting Nay and the Everlasting Yea. Religious thought has been beforehand with all things, saying, We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain of birth.[1]

The pioneers who reported their discovery of Christ in the unseen, spoke of forces working in the severe stress of crucifixion but with fine issues. The freshman of this experience, after he had graduated in the school, wrote to Hebrew and Greek in Corinth: To them that are called, Christ crucified the power of God and the wisdom of God.[2] They who are called have heard a call, have answered it, and are become respondent. Power in the language of the vernacular is energy in science; wisdom in the language of the Hebrew is the scheme of the creation. In the crucifixion was seen a conflict of forces, and the divine scheme in human affairs. The very word work is in request in these early writings: "He that wrought effectually in Peter, so that he became an apostle to the Jews, the same was mighty in me towards

[1] Rom. viii. 22. [2] 1 Cor. i. 24.

the Gentiles."[1] Pithy sentences of a scientific cast are unconsciously strewed over the pages. "According to the power which worketh in us";[2] "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe";[3] "the power of Jesus Christ which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, according to the law of the everlasting God,"[4]—according to the operation of cause and effect throughout the ages.

The three Forces which have been striving with Western humanity were classified in these early days as moulding character and life. Paul longs to know Christ in His place in the creation and the power which is in His resurrection, and the fellowship which is in His sufferings, to be conformed to Him in his life, death, rising again.[5] Three orders of virtue are found in them, and have been funded into the social economy. They are the Three Greatest Forces in our world, the inworking of which we intend to draw out with considerable detail. These social forces are now our atmosphere, we may say they are in our blood, the motion of Christ in the soul, a hereditary strain. We are girded by them unknown. We have to awake the sleeping motion of heredity, and to make ourselves conscious of the Power that worketh in us by consenting to it. There are moments when the working of this Power comes to us as the freshness of spring, and

[1] Gal. ii. 8. [2] Ephes. iii. 20. [3] Ephes. i. 19.
[4] Rom. xvi. 25, 26. [5] Phil. iii. 10.

we see the world within the world, the secret that makes us men, the hope that looks beyond the sunset and the evening star.

Now, what is of the first importance to the right understanding of the cosmic process, which had the future of the Western races in hand when Greece and Rome and Teuton and Celt were breaking up, is frankly to accept the person of Christ departed into the Spiritual kingdoms as a power of impact, an environing pressure, the social force of gravitation, the organising cause. It is this society of God and Christ with man that we call Christianity. The secret of the Christian succession is the augmented and persuasive correspondence, which His passing into the Godhead has excited. Though there is nothing in more relentless evidence, it is probably the stone of stumbling to our historians. Here you have a sure-footed hold on the inner truth of things. In the universal scheme of things there is universal intercourse, and in this intercourse we find the exceeding greatness of Christ's power to usward who believe. To believe what is it? Faith is the vision of Christ which brings Him within speaking distance of us. In this intercourse we find factor for fact, cause and effect, causation and effectuation, in European history. Without it Christianity is the conundrum of history.

One of the elemental principles by which our world is governed, old as the sun, sure as gravitation, is that the superior race, with the superior

ideal, wins the succession and holds the ground. This principle has been brought to the front by evolutionary science, now well known as the survival of the fittest. The Galilean fishermen found a relation to Christ in the supernatural, and became the early units of the superior race with the superior ideals, and they founded the Western world. The European peoples fell into this relation as in harmony with the progress they had made. This communion persists to this day because it is the fittest, and it is the survival of the selection. Max Müller spoke of the Galilean riddle, and Professor Harnack of the Neo-Platonist enigma.[1] The real riddle is that such are Factor and fact, Cause and effect; but that is the old enigma of the sun, moon, and earth, that there should be such globes, such attractions between them, such responsive, such resulting orbits. The Greek would say, it is destiny; the Calvinist, it is election; the biologist, it is selection; the evolutionist, it is the cosmic process; the mystic, it is Love; and the higher pantheism, the tides of eternal emotions. The historian should set himself to explain his facts by these various lights, all converging on Responsiveness to Christ.

What are the April lambs crying for? Why is the snowdrop peeping over the as yet brown sward? Whence the fragrance of the whins on the sandy down? What has happened that the cornfield is yellowing as precious gold? Why is robin

[1] See p. 54.

redbreast at the window-sill in winter who has been so shy and far all summer? How is it that the freezing air has thrown a halo round the moon and given it one of its pensive moods, dreaming, perhaps, of the time when she broke away from the earth? We ask the typhoon why it is blowing as if it were its last, and Vesuvius why it is throwing out a stream of molten mud? The storm of rain reposes on a brilliant arch of many colours. Why, how, what? It is the interplay of social forces. It is the eternal religion in nature.

How happens it that twelve, mostly fishermen, changed the convictions and beliefs of philosopher and peasant, carried a new civilisation from the east which supplanted that of the west, and shifted the centre of gravity of Western societies? What constrained the men and women who for 300 years allowed themselves to be torn by wild beasts, tortured under slow fires and done to death—what gave to these sufferings the strength which finally subjugated the Roman empire? There is one answer, The forces of the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection communicated from the spiritual universe. How did the European nations receive and assimilate these forces into their inner nature and be ruled by them; why did the social economy of the Western nations, instinct and informed with these forces, take the lead of the civilisation of the world? How did the art of the Renaissance feel the truth of this civilisation

and make beautiful its forces? A marvel provoking thought. The sixteenth century rose up in revolt against the social order constructed by the coming of Christ, dying, rising again, and overthrew it, though it had the sanction of a thousand years, and this for the sake of instituting another social order constructed by these same forces. Whence the forces which have supported the succeeding type of Evangelical life, and have guided the fortunes of the most advanced of the advanced Western peoples? There is one only answer. It is the work of forces in society, and the human soul under the sway of the life, the death, and rising of Christ enthroned in the heavens. It is the eternal religion in human nature.

Scientific history compels the historian to come out of his entrenched silence and speak out on the imperial affinities. It counsels the theologian to relieve the religious world of the helpless theory of the devil supreme in human history. It stands aghast at schools of rationalism which make the slovenly use of the words superstition and delusion to account for belief and practice beyond their ken, which actually assume that all history has been blind forces leading blind men into the ditch. The evolutionary process compels us to accept the universe on its own terms. It has been always hard to do it, and this hardship has been the problem of human nature, and of religion and of history, and in the present day the problem is

all the harder,—our progress, culture, and science notwithstanding.

It has been the message and burden of all religion to heal the human sullenness towards the conditions of life, and to produce the genial mood. It has been the mission, in this last cycle of time, to have this message most persuasively reinforced by the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection. The light of Christ's presence in the flesh has supplied an illuminating sense of the abiding divineness in human nature, and importance of our place in this sphere; the heat of His dying has imparted a warmth of feeling for us in our struggle; the electricity of His departure has swept the haze on the horizon, and opened a clear vista of the Elsewhere of our place and service. These elements lay restrained in the olden times, and were released into the evolutionary process in the fulness of time, and have added a regenerated eagerness and emotion to our existence, and, in the nature of things, have given a heightened character to the social economy of the Western peoples.

These latest exports from the spiritual universe entertained by the European mind are responsible for the character of this epoch. It reposes upon them. They meet us in the dire, grim strife and make rational what certainly looks irrational in the universe. They satisfy us. They translate us on to a plane of thought and feeling which gives a view of worlds unknown, but there, in

which we are to take part, by which the whole present severity is justified, softened, ennobled. We greet the unfathomable smile on the creation.

Responsiveness will now write itself into a definition. It is that supreme function of religion by which the man, feeling the touch and stir of God, comes into society with Him, receives from Him the terms of existence, consents to the will over him and offers the sacrifice of his obedience. In the Christian age, the same function, now developed, becomes sensitive over and above to Christ in the heavens, takes the man into His society, there to receive the forces emanating from His person, for a finer consent, a larger obedience, and a more affluent and strenuous life.

We now address ourselves to a detailed treatment of the THREE GREAT FORCES which have gone to the making of the Western man, and to an analysis of the constructive contents which they have imported into the social economy. We begin with the Incarnation, the coming of Christ into the human life.

BOOK II

THE INCARNATION AS AN EVOLUTIONARY FORCE

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st ; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant : what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

CHAPTER I

THE INCARNATION IDEA

The Incarnation idea is essentially that of the unseen universe looking out upon us from the seen. The spiritual world puts in an appearance in the sensuous, and hence comes all the stir which the religions of the world have made. Religion is no other than man trying to get himself into harmony with what he has seen of the unseen universe, trying with more or less of success to make himself responsive to the clamant spiritual world. Mr. Herbert Spencer, with his clear, perceiving mind, has said: "Unlike the ordinary consciousness, the religious consciousness is concerned with that which lies beyond the sphere of sense." But we see beyond the sphere of sense through the medium of sense, and incarnation is the agency between the sensible and supersensible spheres. The Incarnation is a showing and a lighting of the unseen.

Now, the mediation or incarnation, is first in the creation around us, and secondly, in ourselves

as conscious beings, the most highly evolved and most meaningful part of nature. It concerns us, therefore, with some definiteness to know what nature is,—what we see in the seen, what have early poetry, and philosophy later, and science last of all, found in nature. These questions are vital to our study.

We look at a river in flood or fall, and we are fixed to the banks by various thoughts; we look at a glacier-clad mountain, and we are amazed; we wonder at the display of colour in the after-glow of the sunset; we are alarmed at the streamers of the aurora in a frosty sky; we sit in a daisied meadow and observe the orchid, the butterfly, and the rabbit. Now, Professor Clifford, as a master of physical science, would have said of the flood and of the chromatic and the electric exhibition that it was "mind stuff" which has met our mind. Darwin rose from his study of orchids to announce the discovery that the orchid is a modified lily, and that it is profoundly modified to prevent self-fertilisation. He saw in this most curious of plants design and the principle of modification. Professor Huxley, looking at the buttercup and butterfly, would have been saddened at the story of the pain in the ceaseless struggle by which species have acquired the forms they now possess, a sadness which was enough to make a sensitive nature agnostic. Wordsworth would say that there was a presence in nature which disturbed him, whose dwelling was the light of

setting suns and the blue sky and the mind of man, a motion and a spirit which rolled through all things, and that therefore he was a lover of the meadow and the mountain. Plato would have said that he saw all butterflies in the original idea of them, and all buttercups in their archetypes, and that these ideas were eternal and divine. Kepler tells us that when he discovered the laws of motion he caught himself reading some of the thoughts of God.

Primitive man, in his simple intuitions, saw and felt what Plato, Wordsworth, Darwin, and Clifford had seen, each in his own department. In him are rolled up the poet, the philosopher, the man of science, who in these later days have been evolved out of him, and he, the unrefracted man, instantly became the theologian and worshipped God. He read the thoughts and emotions of the Divine Power in the phases of nature and in the drama of his own life, and, startled by the apparition, he brought his sacrifice. He called them, very properly, gods and goddesses, divinities and divineness, for they were the ideas and emotions of God Himself, and what could he do but see deity in them?

We have lost this primitiveness. We go to nature to find illustrations and analogies. We go to human history and register the motions on its surface, the froth of earthly motive and intrigue and pleasure, never coming near that borderland where the fleeting of time passes into the abiding.

Even analogies are only true when they have caught the divine ideas in nature. What we have to do is to go back to the primal state, and see in nature the thoughts of the infinite Mind and in human life the emotions of the eternal Heart; to find struggle, sacrifice, order, principle, beauty, pensiveness, sympathy. Not the analogies of them, but the things in the analogy; not illustrations of them, but the realities illustrated. What we have to picture as we look at the sky of space is a shower of divine thoughts which have been sown in suns and stars. In the flood and the after-glow we have to see God thinking Himself into the creation; looking at our own selves, we have to hear God present in consciousness, speaking aloud and making the drama of history. And then we shall see God clothing the invisibles of Himself in motion, atom, electron, ether, and cell.

The creation is the incarnation of thoughts. The flood, the orchid, the sunset colour, the butterfly are the clothing of some emotions. And we who summarise all idea and emotion on the summits of creation are the more finished incarnation. The thinking of the Infinite mind which underlies nature underlies us. Irenæus long ago said, "The life of man is the vision of God"; Chrysostom, "The true Shekinah is man"; Carlyle, "We are the great inscrutable mystery of God." The immanence in matter comes out in incarnation in life. How the ideas of the Eternal got sown in the creation, how the emotions have got

inwoven into physics and physiology—the mode of it we may not know. Still, the incarnation is not the darkness of a mystery, but the light of it. It is a publication of the secrets of the universe. It is a revelation and a manifestation. The ideal is appealing to us in the real, the viewless looking out upon us in very various costumes. And there is a soul in the man who finds them.

CHAPTER II

THE INCARNATION IDEA ILLUSTRATED

The incarnation idea contains the root principle of the whole creation, the inner meaning of it. The creation is the showing of the universe of spirit, the shining of thought and feeling in sun and cloud, in the aspect of nature, the functions of life, and consciousness in man. In all that we see and know there looks out upon us that which is beyond the sphere and reach of sense, the Eternal in the hinterlands beyond space and sky. Reading it, poetry, art, science, philosophy, religion are inspired. Poetry finds emotion, art the beautiful; philosophy reads ideas, science order; religion going into farthest recesses finds God. We find this spiritual wealth because it is there, and it is in ourselves as the summary and, on the summits, of nature. Nature has thought, feeling, beauty, order inwoven into its fibres and forces, but it does not know them. For the sake of accuracy we shall therefore call this weft in the warp of nature by the name of immanence or

indwelling, or interfusion. We know that we think and feel, and perceive the showing in nature, and we shall therefore speak of ourselves as the incarnation.

We shall take a just impression of the thought and feeling interfused in the material world by taking a few impressive instances with us.

A striking sight in nature is a river in spate. Whole parishes will turn out to see the swollen, rushing waters. The channel is brimful; bank speaks to bank. Here is a bar of schist crossed, leaving silver eddies behind; there the backwater gladdens the willow and the alder. The water is turbid with its fulness and in a hurry to deliver its burden to the ocean. If it is a spring flood the spray of early green on the beech and the coo of the cushat dove will lend a note of tenderness to the tumult. If it is an autumn flood the yellowing beech and the bass caw of the rook will give seriousness to what is serious enough. We interview the waters and they have thought and feeling to give to us. We think how great it is to overflow with ideas, how good to see the shallows of time and sense go under, we feel how fine is the passion of being. There is a hurry in our years, we are carrying much into the Eternal, we are warned passion is muddy. Indwelt in the affinities of atoms and wavelets of ether are thoughts and emotions received by us which lead us into shrines of worship.

The human consciousness extracts from nature

its unconscious secrets. In the modern world, Wordsworth is continually communing with nature and nature communicating with him. To the daisy he says that a hundred times

> Have I derived from thy sweet power
> Some apprehension;
> Some steady love; some brief delight;
> Some memory that had taken flight;
> Some chime of fancy wrong or right.

A step higher and we come upon an affluence of thought in the world of life. The orchid is commonly an ungainly plant with a gainly flower. It was long a perplexity to science, where to find its family circle and the meaning of its structures and functions. Darwin solved the riddle and showed that it belonged to the lily family. Every one knows that a flower consists of five circles of structure, one within the other—the calyx or outer sheath, the corolla which gives it the radiance of colour, the stamen which contains the fertilising powder, the pistil which receives from the stamen, the ovary which contains the seeds to be fertilised. In the orchid some of these parts are suppressed, some coalesce to make a new organ, some are so modified that they cannot be compared with similar organs in the ordinary flower. The resulting unlikeness is so great that new names had to be coined to express it. We speak of the labellum, the column, the rostellum, the pollinia, and what not. The laws, principles, methods we

encounter here are thoughts from the unseen inlaid in the structure of the plant. The scientific mind reads them.

Darwin finds a feeling of the poet, an ideal of the philosopher, and a dogma of the theologian, in explaining to us the surprise he has met. He speaks of the like and dislike of the orchid as Wordsworth: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that nature tells us in the most emphatic manner that she abhors perpetual self-fertilisation." He speaks of the archetype as Plato, referring to the likeness found in unlikeness: "Thus homology clears away the mist from such terms as the scheme of nature, archetypal patterns, ideals, etc., for these terms express real facts." As a liberal theologian he finds more than one ulterior meaning in the modification the plant has undergone. "This treatise affords me an opportunity of attempting to show that the study of organic beings may be as interesting to an observer who is fully convinced that the structure is due to secondary causes as to one who views every trifling detail of structure as the result of the direct interposition of a deity." The orchid is endowed with, immanent with, inlaid with law, principle, archetype, purpose.

When we come to a very primitive form of animal life we find that the sentiment of the beautiful has already found its way into the creation. The sponge is a village built by a community of primitive creatures, which are only

little drops of jelly, in which no structure is visible, and it is the village despoiled of its dwellers which we use in our toilets. These little creatures secrete from sea-water a flinty material. One species spins the flint into delicate, graceful, glassy threads and weaves a thousand of them into a trumpet-shaped vase, so beautiful that science has been compelled to give it the drawing-room name of Venus' Flower-Basket. This vase of beauty is from ten to twelve inches long, of intertwined flinty fibres translucent, quite a fairy structure. The sentiment of beauty came early into the creature and has dwelt in it ever since, evolving love in its onward career. Frankly, in bird life we recognise the rudiments of love. The fluting of the thrush in the dawn and the whistling of the blackbird in the sunset, sitting high up among the spray of early green on the elm, cheer the mother bird in the labours of the nest in the evergreen bush below. Nature knows nothing of beauty and love; they are woven into her without her knowledge, an unconscious immanence pointing to the incarnation in us. The principle of immanence links nature on to the universe of spirit, which poetry, science, philosophy, and religion have equally discerned as the fountains of the visible.

Wordsworth writes an elegy of the fall of the house of Norton, when father and mother and eight sons were killed in the civil wars of yore. An only daughter survived the wreck. Lands

were forfeited, and the manor-house left without an owner. The lady, the attainted heiress, wandered far into other lands, to return, at last, a single woman, to take up her dwelling in a cottage within sight of the ancient domain. On an April day, when nature was assuming her early green, she sits beneath an old tree with a broken heart made whole by the kindly healing of time, when a herd of deer troop past. One of the number falls back at the sight of the lady, slowly moves up to her and lays its head on her knee, as if it felt the sadness of the desolated heart and carried a memory of the despoiled demesne. It was a white doe which was brought into the house when young by one of the boys and grew with the growing family. Ever after the doe keeps within sight of Emily's cottage. It becomes a companion, and the presence of the animal gave a sweetness to the melancholy which had long lost its bitterness.

After the death of Emily the doe comes every Sunday with the church bells following the people, and as they pass into the church it passes to the grave where Emily has at last laid down her grief and rests beside her mother. Memory, sadness, sympathy are incarnate in the nerves of animals. Wordsworth finds in the winning ways of the creature an incarnation of divine feelings of an ancient time.

> Thou, thou art not a child of time,
> But daughter of the Eternal prime.

We have come into our kingdom by carrying

all the wealth of idea and feeling with which nature below is endowed, and receiving that something which we call personality. Of person, Reid, the founder of Scottish philosophy, affirms: "I am not thought, I am not action, I am not feeling. I am something that thinks, acts, suffers." Nature is unconscious of the simple thought, feeling, motion infused into it. When we crossed the bar of the unconscious world our distinction is best expressed by personality. We may debate till doom the inner nature of personality, but we cannot debate the thing itself, the person, nor question the stride taken. Personality is the likest reality to the Highest in the universe. As immanence is the miracle of matter and life, incarnation is the miracle of consciousness, so we define for the sake of distinctness.

The doctrine of the incarnation contains fragments of every kind of thought of all ages. It contains a fragment of Plato's Greek idealism, Hegel's German idealism, and Green's English idealism. We are ideas of God. It contains a fragment of Spinoza's pantheism and Tennyson's Higher pantheism. God shows Himself in man. It contains the two opposing truths that God is in the creation and above the creation. This way lies the thought of the plain man. He takes something from everybody; he makes no excluding system and walls himself in it. Enough for him in one mood: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," which He could only

do by sowing His ideas into it. In another mood, In the beginning was the Logos, the Eternal mind, moving in the universe and in us, with His thoughts and affections. How thought works as force and ideas become laws dictating to the sun and moon, how affection is lent to the flower, and the stars have been flung as a shower of thoughts into space, how God is in man and man in God, how the divine warp receives the ever-changing mortal weft—this is beyond our knowing.

Just here the Incarnation in Christ is linked into the history of the whole creation. It is not a wedge driven into the unity of nature, rather it is nature fulfilling herself, the home-coming of the hope of ages, the star dust of incarnations rolled into a sun. Though we are on the eminences of nature, there is an imperfection, an errancy, a wilfulness in us which makes us the scandal of law and order. So unfinished is man that theology had to construct a doctrine of the Fall, a disaster and a catastrophe, to save face, and students of evolutionary science, while rejecting theology, have so written as to confirm every whit the doctrine. But the intuitions, those first affections, in the presence of this failure, have felt and said that nature will yet fulfil herself, and humanity will show God by another Incarnation. This was the desire of all nations, and the desire came to its own in Jesus Christ. When the sinless man appeared, the Ideal, the Archetype, the Archangel of humanity, then He is discerned as

the incarnation of the abysmal Personality, whom we feel in the heart of the universe. The highest and deepest we can say of God is in terms of personality, the highest in nature. The appearance, therefore, of the Ideal man carries the incarnation of the personality of God. This way science reaches the divinity of Christ, as it has been already reached by poetry and philosophy.

The divinity was a discovery of experience made by select spirits of the first century, and it was repeated in the experience of masses of men, when the Nicene Council gave it the authority of dogma, now as containing the recorded discovery of three centuries of continuous experience. Christianity consists of discoveries made by men in association with Christ. The idea of a divine revelation forced upon the mind by authority is now out of date. We shall see presently how the problem of experience stands in respect to the discovery of truth. The truth respecting the Person of Christ has to be accepted at first on trust, as indeed all truth, which, at first, is tradition. It is common just now to pillory dogma, tradition, formula, but they are portable forms of truth and necessities of the mind. We are not to stay in them; the wealth they carry is at first in Chancery, and we are wards till we attain our majority and translate dogma into experience. The religious inheritance of two millenniums has title-deeds of undoubted validity.

The earliest Christmas discoveries about the

Incarnation were cast into expression in this wise. Paul anticipates idealism in the phrases he uses. "He is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of the whole creation. He is before all things, and by Him all things hold together." The perfect man has, of right, the primacy in the creation, and it must be read by the light in Him. Later a Hebrew thinker uses the evolutionary mode of thought: "God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in time past by the prophets to the fathers, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things." It was the discovery of our interest in this heritage that lifted the old world into the new over the watershed which parts and joins them at the same time.

John puts a strain of philosophy into the discovery and finds the archetypal Mind. "In the beginning was the Eternal mind, and He was in fellowship with God, and He was God: He is the Light which lighteneth every man who cometh into the world. The Eternal mind was incarnate in the flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His transcendence, the transcendence of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of beauty and truth." Passages like these are now stilted into doctrine or shrunken into commonplace by the routine of quotations. Originally they spoke of a discovery, and we have to rewrite them from the new point of view. This is the work waiting the new age. Out of the melting-pot into which all things are now thrown

we can get new moulds into which to cast this ancient and equally modern experience of discovery.

We regard the Incarnation of Christ as the radical idea of the creation come into its coronation. The royal hope for humanity burns bright in the incarnation. One of the evolutionary forces of the first rank which initiated the Western civilisation of these centuries was this hope. The classical world was dying in the great travail; the forces which had served it so long were spent. This hope gave it the new development. This hope has to be published anew, freshened by the light which science supplies. A gloom has fallen on our culture by reason of the emphasis which science has laid on the tears and tragedy deep in human affairs; pessimism has acquired fresh drops of bitterness; agnosticism born in the benevolent mind of Huxley is the shroud of the "unutterable sadness" which had fallen on his kind heart.

A Scotch proverb says, "The evening brings a' hame"—the home of a warm fireside. But the evening upon us is that of old age. We publish the hope of the Incarnation, and sing with new accents the old anthem of Christmas: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be on His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

CHAPTER III

INCARNATION, THE ROOT IDEA OF RELIGION, SCIENCE, POETRY, PHILOSOPHY

We have treated the responsive forces which have gone to the making of religion and the correlated social economies. It includes them in a general term, puts them into a class, gives them the nature of a generalisation, when we say, that they repose on the Incarnation idea. They can thus be roughly divided into two large groups—those which were initiated and ruled by the sense of divine ideas and emotions interfused in nature, and those which were initiated and ruled by the sense of the divine in human personality. A third group may be made of those in which the two elements mingle in various proportions without the decided projection of the one or the other. But these details need not to be intruded here. In short, we may say that the raw material of religion, science, poetry is the Incarnation idea.

In all civilisations we must expect to find the

imperfect in every form and grade of it, for it is of the essence of human nature that we find the imperfect where the perfect was intended, that we see the intention of the finished but meet with the rough-hewn realities of the unfinished. We must also expect to find religion in varying states of decay, waiting for a regeneration. And it is for the imperfect and the decaying that the last Incarnation has inspired a touching sympathy. Christmas Day comes to collect this sympathy into charity and benevolence, and to provoke a respect for the weak, the ignorant, and the inferior of our kind. The Christian Church has never lacked the missionary sympathy, but it does lack an intellectual sympathy with the imperfect conceptions and the rude worships of the lower civilisations.

The fact is, the ideas and institutions of antiquity—and they all repose on religion—are a maze to which the clues we possess lead but a short way, as students of comparative religion know but too well. But a principle of biological science will take us far, which has affirmed the common-sense canon that the key to functions and structures in simple organisms will be found in the developed structures and functions of higher life. A speck of jelly is all that makes the misty body of the hydra, a creature which could be cut into two pieces and would grow again, which, when first discovered a hundred years ago, was sought after by kings, for this extraordinary

vitality. But this was virgin generation, and is understood by sexual life in the higher animals.

A mass of pulp forty feet long makes the body of some jelly-fishes. This pulp draws in at the approach of danger, and this is a nerve movement which corresponds to sight and hearing, when as yet there is not the shadow of an eye or ear to be seen. It is understood by sight and hearing in later life. The lancelet is a little fish-like creature to be seen at low water in the sand. It has a long rod with square brick-like structures along the centre line of the body, which supports it, known as the notochord or chord of the back. This structure appears in the embryo of the vertebrates and is replaced by the true spine. The lancelet has an incipient backbone; that which lay so long in the plasma of the invertebrates had put in an appearance. We know its nature from the developed backbone of the mammal. We will take this way into the maze.

It is wholly superfluous to enter into the obscure ideas and customs and myths of primitive civilisations. We take Wordsworth, a developed man of Western civilisation, and we will find conspicuous in him one order of ideas on which the first group of civilisations aforementioned reposes, and in the ultimate resort it will be found to be the Incarnation idea. We take our lead from him.

Wordsworth is the poet of our century who has taught us what to look for in nature and how

to touch nature by the sympathy of our mind with the mind in her. His readings were obscure to his generation because he took us back to the more primitive times. It was in the society of the rude dalesmen of the Lake country that he found this primitiveness. It is what shepherds, cottagers, the village schoolmaster, the leech-gatherer, the herdsman living in a single room, born among the Athol hills, in whom sensation, soul, and form were melted into one, who, though he loved his Bible, found his faith in the mountains, who not merely believed but saw,—it is what such as these thought that he reports to us in poetic thought. When we look closely into the pedigree of his message, we find that he has revived the relation to nature which lies at the root of the primitive mind, and from which we have been removed a long way by a larger relation, in which the lower was included and absorbed.

Wordsworth felt that every flower enjoyed the air it breathed, that St. Mary's Loch was visibly delighted through her depths; the moon looks round with pleasure; the hill parleys with the setting sun and sends its own deep quiet to our hearts; he saw a light which never was on sea or land. The boulder stranded on a hill-top was a thing endued with sense; the stars had feelings which they sent down to us; the sunset was the apparition of a god; there was a spirit in the woods; the cuckoo was no bird but an invisible

thing; the lark had a singing mind; earth and air and sea are a revelation infinite. The primitive mind feels nature thrilling with the ideas and emotions of God. The incarnation idea generalises it all. The classical lines often cited may be placed here. He feels a disturbing presence in nature, and a sense

> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,—
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.

This is the incarnation idea in poetry; nature is the clothing of a presence, and contains within it an interfusion, a motion, and a spirit. The creation is the creative Mind incorporating thought into physics and emotion into organisms. All the religions of the world show the stir of these thoughts and emotions perceived by ancient societies. These religions are well known as natural religion. It takes a lengthened study of Wordsworth to make us congenial with the primitive mind, so differently arranged from our own. Under the lead of Wordsworth we have recovered this primitiveness. We have not broken with the past. Wordsworth links us with the past and shows us the evolution of the past. He has found Christ, and writes in a letter to Sir George Beaumont, dated 1825: "Theologians may puzzle

themselves about dogmas as they like, the religion of gratitude cannot mislead us. I look abroad upon nature, I think of the best part of our species, I lean upon my friends, and I meditate upon the Scriptures, especially the Gospel of St. John, and my creed rises up of itself with the ease of an exhalation and yet a fabric of adamant." The Gospel of John is the gospel of the incarnation in Jesus Christ. In Wordsworth we see that religion has produced the evolved backbone when it has become Christian, the evolved eye of higher life. Here the science of the incarnation idea.

The relations of the divine incarnate in nature to the Incarnation in Christ is the relation of an ascending series. The parts have found their whole. The ideas distributed in the cloud and the leaf, the emanations distributed in the daisy and the doe, are gathered up into a Personality, from whom they have originally come. There is a grief in the principle of natural selection, there is a beauty in the hue and line of a bird's feather, though adaptive coloration has been acquired in a great struggle; there is majesty in the magnitude of a mountain; there are secrets in the woodland haunts of the squirrel and woodpecker. All these are ideas and radiations of the Infinite Mind in shrines of incarnation scattered over nature. Christ is the personality in whom they consist. Here the evolution of the incarnation idea.

When the Greek mind became responsive to Christ, it called Him the Logos or Word, the Eternal Speech of whom all creation is speaking in dim detail and is the logoi or little speeches of nature. The Christ lay in the bosom of nature, in the mistletoe and yule log of our Teutonic ancestors, and the oread and dryad of the Greek. The Greek anthem of Christmas Day has yet to be understood and chanted in our churches.

In the beginning was the Eternal Mind and He was God. All things were born of Him; in Him was the primal Life. The Eternal mind became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld the splendour of His being. Here the philosophy of the incarnation idea.

In the second group of social economy, the divine incarnate in man, in faculty and destiny, is the organising force, which becomes the more influential when death strips the incarnation of the fleshly guise. From deep to deep we go in life, and in the deep of death, the personality now of ampler faculty and destiny, is seen a glorified spirit. The stir and tumult, which have been made by the personality incarnate in the human body, and that personality extracted in death for another sphere, have been forces of civilisation of the first magnitude. They repose on the generalisation in the incarnation idea.

Tennyson represents in the Western, specially the Anglo-Saxon, world this group of societies. We read the lower civilisations by the lamp

of his thought. He sees the divine in man incorporate, and in death he sees the incorporated personality released intact. We see him in communion with departed spirits, and we see the ineffable possibilities in man. He finds, enshrined in man, the abysmal deeps of personality. God in man is one with man in God; man's word is God in man; we fulfil our doom, making Him broken gleams; if we could see and hear the thing we are, the Vision of nature and of ourselves is He; the babe is a dear spirit, lost in his own shadow and the fleshly sign; our hearing is not hearing and our seeing is not sight, there is something behind them incarnated.

In death, from the great deep to the great deep the incarnated person goes; we pass but do not die; that which drew from out the boundless deep turns again home. Had we the sensitiveness of Tennyson, or of Paul, who felt himself compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, we would be in fellowship with departed spirits. The poet found them haunting the silence of the breast, imagination calm and fair, the memory like a cloudless air, the conscience as a sea at rest. He speaks of a time when communion with the ghostly Arthur became an experience:

> So word by word, and line by line,
> The dead man touch'd me from the past,
> And all at once it seem'd at last
> The living soul was flash'd on mine.

In the most advanced societies of the ancient

world, this vision of the divine in man, though real, took tentative and clumsy forms. We find Rome deifying the greatness of the Emperor; and as many turned out unworthy to be called even a man, Virgil looked to the future for the advent of the ideal man, and Constantine found Christ in Virgil's future man. In Tennyson we meet with this sensitiveness in developed purity, and the purity has come in the atmosphere which the risen and departed Spirit of Christ has thrown around us. The salient clumsiness of antiquity is lost. In Alpine mountaineering, as we ascend, the pyramids and domes which once made the sky line and our landscape are diminished. This sensitiveness to the encompassing cloud of witnesses is a subdued feeling in the Christian world, because of our association with Christ, the worship of whom has diminished the lower ranges of the spirit world. The elementary relation to departed spirits in the lower civilisations is here seen in the matured, refined, chastened communion with Christ.

Wordsworth is cast in the Greek mould, and is specially awake to nature and to Plato's ideas. Tennyson is cast in the Roman mould, and he is sensitive to the riddle of man and the universe of spirits where is his destiny. All men of the finer fibre, in many moments, have known passages between them and nature in which they found themselves in contact with something more than her, and have been awed or spellbound. And we

all who have loved, have felt that there is that in us which is more than love and akin to it, which is within it, that it has come from far and dwells here waiting to be translated and to bloom in its own native domains. It speaks of deeps unplumbed. "Love is nature's truth and death her lie."

All nature is an imagery of unseen things; it is a gallery of Art, it does not exist on its own account, it incarnates an ulterior and ultra universe. We are the image of the unseen God, by pre-eminence, preferred before all things; and as we are a blurred image, when Christ appeared incarnate, He was discovered, by correspondence with Him, to be the express Image of His Person, the brightness of His splendour. On these incarnations reposes the evolutionary process which has guided the destiny of human societies, and on the special incarnation in Christ, carrying the earlier with it, reposes the destiny of Western societies. Round this nucleus are organised morals, politics, art, letters.

Needless to say, the look of man, in many directions, is depressing and despairing; but we have seen the Original and the Archetype. Taking the elementary principle of gradation for our guide, we are confident that the germ of the ideal is sleeping in every lower grade and in every wasted and sickened condition. There is no shadow in the darkness, only in the light. There is no rainbow but on the cloud. The sunny side

is there. We accept the shadows of the Eternal on this transitory existence; it is the riddle of our earth. We see the stars of the night, and we have seen His star in the East. We wait till the day break and the shadows flee away.

The incarnation in Christ stands in the same relation to the second type of youthful civilisations as to the first. It is the passage of the parts into the whole. The divine discerned is a strand of feeling perceived in one man, a power of faculty in another, a beauty of virtue in a third. No man has a rounded completeness; even his one excellence appears with serious imperfections though it stands out. In Christ the fragments are collected into one Person; this one human personality has all the excellences in harmonious proportion. A divine personality has been grafted into a human personality. We do not know what personality is, but it is the highest and the abyss in us, and we affirm it of God. We do not see in Christ a great idea or a great emotion of God incarnated. We see the personality of God incarnated. The mingling of the divine personality with the human has given us a universal man, not of one nation, but of all nations, the Original of manhood. Science recognises the incarnation in Christ as the evolution of personality.

This remarkable fact remains about the Christian incarnation, that it was received by the two races for whom the older religions had done their best, which then stood spent, waiting for a

future. The Greek, the developed type of the first class, and the Roman, the developed type of the second class, were both sick and despairing when the message of the Christian incarnation came to them and changed the classical into the Christian world. Later the same movement pushed Teuton, Slav, Celt into the Christian world. The same movement is going on before our eyes when primitive races receive the last incarnation. The Fiji Islands and Samoa are christianised; and, not to go further, Mr. H. M. Stanley has observed: "When I was at Lake Victoria, eighteen years ago, there was not a missionary there; now there are 40,000 Christians and 200 churches. The natives are enthusiastic converts, and would spend their last penny to acquire a Bible." And there is no violence or suddenness in these human movements. It is the law of evolution at work, the natural passage of the lower incarnations into the higher, a movement native to the mind, along the line of the basal intuitions.

We shut our doors to the setting sun; we open them to the rising sun. We who have seen a rosy sunrise of a winter's morning when snow lay in wreaths and was rolled into cornices on the eaves and an expanse of sea was a horizon bordered by a stretch of cloud simulating a mountain range, —we feel that winter bears the promise of better and brighter things. The incarnation gives to the missionary a rosy message to darkest places.

CHAPTER IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND THE INCARNATION

As we first catch sight of Christmas feelings entering into the career of Western civilisation, we see eager missionaries anxious to supplant the winter festival of Pagan ideas by a festival of Christian ideas. The order was passed to cluster the memories of the birth of Christ round the natural feelings of the season. It always is the case that great actors in a period of transition scarcely know the whole purport and the far future of their action. As often happens, they feel that they have to break with a decayed or bad past, while what is really happening is that the past is creating a future and is father to it. The evolutionist sees that Christmas feelings gave a richness to ethnic feelings, included them in a larger whole.

The long night had come, the sun had set with a threatened afternoon, leaving an ominous afterglow of reds and purples, but came back, though reluctantly, to the east again. We are not for-

saken. Stacks on the stubble field, apples scenting the cottage, the memory of summer suns and yellowing woodlands, the mercy and mystery of what has gone to the making of the year, inspire thanks and hopes. The pathos of the season remains as of old, and into it a new affluence of gratitude and good cheer is infused from the birth in Bethlehem, of a finer mercy and a profounder mystery. Christianity did not break with Hebraism, Hellenism, Teutonism, but took them along with it into the Western economy.

Nothing can stand outside Evolution in our day, and it is not an upsetting, upstart principle: it is essentially conservative. It holds on to the past and looks to sires of long ago. Man is by nature a conserving evolutionist. Through all time he has felt his unity with the past, and he holds stubbornly enough to the tradition of the fathers, even to the cut of their clothes. But evolution conserves by rearranging much for us. To-day old beliefs have received a close sifting from the side of criticism and science, but we are facing no revolution, only changed proportion and shifted centre of gravity. Christmastide represents beliefs about the Virgin birth and the incarnation which have been severely cross-questioned, and we must see how they look in the altered situation.

Bishop Gore a few years ago wrote: "Among subjects of present controversy not the least important is the Virgin Birth of Christ." The

Dean of Westminster recently wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "No one will dispute the fact that in the minds of thoughtful men there is a very serious disquietude in regard to the doctrine of the Virgin birth." To "natural science" he traces the disquiet. But Professor Huxley wrote twenty-five years ago to the late Dean of Wells, that "virgin procreation and resuscitation from apparent death are ordinary phenomena for the naturalist."[1] Huxley's high authority that there is no miracle in virgin generation has made no impression for the obvious reason that it is an obscure generality and only a select few would know what it covers. The men who know science are few; they who know the recesses of science are still fewer; they who feel the bracing atmosphere of science are many and a growing number. The incredible in miracle is an old difficulty, as also the present hitch. The virgin birth is re-regarded as a portentous example of it, and the evidence of history is discounted because of the forestalling bias of the impossible in miracle.

Now the new invasion of science has opened an intervening chapter on virgin reproduction which the most fertile imagination fifty years ago could not have forecast. It is a romance. This chapter sends a message to the festive Christmas season, sullied by doubt, that virgin birth is a supreme function in nature, and is both overt and cryptic through whole realms to this day, and that a Virgin

[1] Gore's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 246.

birth in the human family is not a violent irruption into the course of nature. This fact so broadly stated and Huxley's averment so trenchantly put, require to be expanded into considerable detail, and the ways of nature tracked into some of her retreats, to carry an availing impression of their far-reaching meaning. Which is here attempted. The Virgin birth of our Lord is to-day one of the preoccupations of the religious world.

We have found that the incarnation idea is the foundation principle of the creation. We shall now see that Virgin generation has a large, long place in the scheme of nature, and that the epithets miraculous and supernatural, in the familiar use of them, applied to the Virgin birth of Christ, can no longer be allowed. We shall then look at the spiritual interferences which have been admitted into the evolutionary process in the great epochs of the creation, and the Virgin birth as one of these interventions. We shall next find the culminated incarnation in Christ to be one main dynamic in those social forces which have gone to develop the Western man and have compelled the history of the European peoples.

CHAPTER V

VIRGIN GENERATION IN THE LOWER CREATION

We begin with plant life. The disposition of the sex elements has given to botany its two large classes, the cryptogam and phanerogam, the non-flowering and flowering plants. As the words imply, the sex elements are concealed or cryptic in the first large division, open and clear in the second division, to be seen in the flower.

In the non-flowering class, a new generation appears without the outer congress of germ and sperm, which science calls parthenogenesis, in plain language, virgin origin. The snow plant is a curious red organism. It propagates by fission. Each plant divides, and the broken chip becomes a new plant, and the division is repeated and repeated till in a few hours a wide tract of snow is reddened by a forest growth. The puff-ball is one of our mushrooms, growing uncanny forms in wood and meadow, called fungi in science. If you cut a young specimen through the middle, you will find in the inside a soft white pith. When

ripe the pith becomes grains of brown dust like unto snuff, each enclosed in a membrane, which if you tear open will scatter its dusty contents all round. This dust is the spore by which the mushroom is reproduced. The word spore is used to distinguish a seminal product obtained without a flower from one which is obtained from a flower, which is strictly the seed. Each puff-ball contains a million of spores, and each will produce a new plant. These two plants hold the most primitive form of the idea of virgin generation.

Observe that it is in the flower that sex elements are separated into male and female, and no flower has appeared in these lowly plants; but the generating function is there all the same. Sex organs appear at the other end of the scale, and we infer that male and female elements exist diffused in the spore of the snow plant and mushroom, and mingle secretly. Hence they are cryptogams. The rising gradation shows us the diffusion.

Above these orders is the fern family. Every one knows that the fern does not flower, but it is not so long ago since it was discovered how nature produces new ferns so profusely. Every one has seen little bodies on the back of the fronds of the fern; these are cases of spores, which, when mature, give out a brown dust like that of the mushroom. Lay these spores in a pot of damp earth and they will produce a leaf-like body known as prothallus, or first shoot, which attaches itself to the earth by hairs. On this leaf will grow two minute

cellular bodies just visible to the unaided eye, which are differentiated male and female elements, answering to the anther and stigma of flowering plants. The confluence of these bodies produces a new generation. This is known as the alternation of generation, the first being a virgin generation and the second sexual. We find male and female elements were involved in the fern spore, and it required a second generation to separate them.

There is yet another mode of generation in the fern family. Some ferns, in some situations, will grow young plants on their fronds, called bulbels, which are thrown off and become, directly they take root, new ferns. This manner of generation is known as budding, a viviparous generation, like unto the young produced by the higher animals.

Four modes of generation come into view in the earliest ideas of the creation: by fission or splitting, by spore, by budding, which are purely virgin procreation; the fourth is generation of sex joined to that without sex in the alternative economy. The contents of the generating cells early show us the sperm and the germ as together permeating the organism, and in the case of virgin reproduction they mingle in the crypts of life.

An evolution of sex took place in the flowering plants, but the inner principle of sexless reproduction is retained in ways so significant that it puts an accent on her favour for the primary idea. In the flower the plant separates the generating energy into male and female organs, and enshrines

the floral sacrament of love with the halo of the corolla. But the temporary separation shows the diffusion of the germ and sperm cells over the whole plant. The retention of parthenogenesis is seen in the fact that commonly congress of the differentiated elements takes place in the same individual plant. The plant is self-fertilised, known as hermaphroditism, practically a virgin generation. It has its parallel in the alternation of generations in the non-flowering class. The prothallus leaf corresponds to the flower, which is composed of four or five parts, known to botanists as floral leaves.

In expressive variations Nature shows us her primitive principle of virgin generation. A nurseryman replenishes many kinds of his stock by cuttings. When a slip begins to throw leaves above and rootlets below, it has become a new individual by the mingling of male and female cells within itself. The Gloxinia is one of the ornaments of our greenhouse. It has large bell-shaped flowers, a corolla of a velvety gloss veering from white to pink, purple, mauve. Take a leaf and make a notch in it and lay it on a sandy bottom, a new plant will start up as by magic at the spot irritated by the cut. It belongs to the order Gesneria, other species of which have a similar sensitiveness. The Begonia, one of our garden plants, has the same property, and can be propagated by the leaf. Both these orders also seed by the flower. Injure or break the roots of

the Moth orchid (Phalœnopsis) and young plants will start from the ruptured part. The slipper and other orchids are multiplied by division. In these cases what we observe is that the irritation of slicing a slip from a rose, or notching a leaf of the Gloxinia, or breaking the roots of an orchid, leads to a cryptic congress of germ and sperm, and to virgin generation after the manner of cryptogam. They multiply by sending off bits of their bodies on a message of new life. Each chip is impearled with male and female elements to produce a new individual.

We take an imposing impression of Nature's partiality for her primitive principle of parthenogenesis when we see it placed in the service of flowering plants alongside of sex generation. The strawberry flowers and seeds profusely, but it also propagates by suckers which grow on creeping stems, and touching earth take root and become new individuals. From this way of seedless and virgin generation come all our garden strawberries. Grass has taken possession of the whole earth by means of underground creeping stems from which a fresh generation issues, though it flowers and seeds freely. The potato is a staple food of the country. It is obtained by virgin generation. The potato is not the fruit of a flower. It is a swollen part of a creeping underground branch, the same in character as that of grasses, known to science as fleshy-rhizome. In this fleshy branch are borne buds, familiarly known as the eyes of the

potato. These buds are young plants grown on the thickened branch by mingled male and female elements diffused over the plant, while the swollen stem is a store of food laid up for the young plant like unto lactation among animals. It is a case of virgin generation. Natural selection finds a safer and a conquering function in reproduction without sex. Bulb-forming plants, as hyacinth and onion, also propagate by the primary idea without the intervention of sex. The bulb is only a disguise or sheath thrown round a shortened stem which lies at the base from which the new plant issues. Orchids are highly specialised forms. Their stems are often of the nature of bulbs, on which grow new plants by the method of parthenogenesis.

I will only add to this most interesting excursion into the ways of nature that in critical situations nature resorts to the primary idea of virgin generation. Plants which have taken to a mountain habitat, or which lie there stranded from the glacial period, where summers are short and severe, have acquired the habit of growing bulbels or young plants sometimes on the same stalk on which flowers are also produced. Three grasses, one saxifrage now almost extinct, one of the polygonum family, on the Scotch mountains, have acquired this swift and safe way of reproduction, known as viviparous. The irritating environment, like the notch on the Gloxinia leaf, has reminded these advanced types of the primitive idea.

It is the way of Nature to make skirmishes into her outlying realms and to plant outposts from which we see where she is going and what she is about to do. Alongside of virgin generation she shows us the separation of the sexes as a part of the same economy. A class of plants is known as dicœcious, which means keeping two houses, of which the willow and the holly are instances, which produce male flowers on one individual and female flowers on another, and the pollen is carried mostly by the wind from the one to the other. Here our outlook is upon the latest phase of the sexual economy, the division of the sexes.

Beside the willow in spring you will see the hazel and the birch in flower, a class of plants which are known as monœcious, which means keeping one house, where distinct male and female flowers appear on the same tree. Every one has seen the catkins of the hazel waving in elegant tassels, from which the yellow pollen dust is shaken off by the wind, but every one does not easily notice the female flower cased in two green sheaths or bracts, with ten or more protruding tiny crimson stigmas ready to receive the flying pollen. Here we look out upon the whole field of nature back and forth to the farthest limit, and catch the principle which embraces the entire reproductive economy, that the germ and sperm elements are diffused over the body of every plant and animal. Nature will not allow us to forget the primitive principle of parthenogenesis.

Another scout which Nature has sent forth from the lower creation is the ash, which will grow on the same tree one year flowers wholly male, another year wholly female, and another male and female flowers together. Here we are informed of her partiality for variation and the possibilities she keeps in reserve for reproductive purpose. We can set no limit to her resource and no limitation to her permutations.[1]

But the physiological principle of parthenogenesis is emphasised throughout, that the male and female elements are diffused through every organism, plant and animal, and the congress of the two elements in the same individual for procreation is a matter of environing stimulus. This is the inner idea of virgin generation.

[1] "As soon as the three Orchidean forms, Monachanthus, Mysanthus, and Catasetum, which had previously been ranked as three distinct genera, were known to be sometimes produced on the same plant, they were immediately considered as varieties; and now I have been able to show that they are the male, female, and hermaphrodite forms of the same species."—Darwin's *Origin of Species*, p. 349, cheap edition, 1901.

CHAPTER VI

VIRGIN GENERATION IN THE HIGHER CREATION

Parallel with the division of the non-flowering and flowering classes in vegetation is the division of the non-backboned and backboned animals. The firstlings of the non-backboned may be put, in convenience for my purpose, into the amœba, jelly-fish, sponge, coral. The prevailing manner of generation here is by fission and budding. It has been calculated that an infusorian,—one of the simplest forms,—will so divide and redivide as to have a family of a million in four days, after the manner of the snow plant. A sea anemone will, of its own accord, break into two, and each half regenerate into a whole. For the commercial cultivation of sponges it has been suggested to cut up living sponges, and thus multiply them like unto the propagation by slips of the rose and the vine. Among cœlenterates,—the scientific name for the Order above the lowest,—"asexual reproduction runs riot";[1] they "exhibit profuse

[1] *Evolution of Sex*, by Professors Geddes and Thomson, p. 193.

asexual multiplication,"[1]—so Professors Geddes and Thomson.

In the higher group of the backboneless kingdom I shall mention the worm, starfish, insect, sea squirt, the last bringing us to the borders of the backbone kingdom, making indeed the junction of the two classes. Bits taken from the centre of the body of a worm[2] will grow a mouth, brain, sense organs, and become a new creature, behaving as the leaf of the Gloxinia, by possessing the same condition of mingled sex elements. The Nais is a creature common in the mud of ponds, interesting to look at from its bright red colour. It throws out a bud from the middle of its body, which is set free and becomes a new individual, like the bulbel of plants. A single arm torn off from a starfish will generate into an entire creature of the usual five arms, like a rose obtained from a slip. In one British starfish, fission is a common mode of generation.[3]

We are familiar with the economy of the beehive, perhaps not so familiar with the family arrangements, that require virgin birth in the social economy and a suggestive kind of it. The labour of the hive is shared by three kinds of bees. The queen bee replenishes the life and governs the society; the workers build the comb,

[1] *Evolution of Sex*, p. 195. [2] *Lumbriculus variegata.*

[3] *Linckia. Lumbriculus* and *Linckia* are mentioned by Professor D'Arcy W. Thompson in the article from which a quotation is given later.

cater for it, and store the honeyed forage; the drones, from whom the fathers of the community are selected. Though the bridal of the queen takes place, it is so regulated that she also preserves her virginity. She lays two kinds of eggs: virgin eggs, from which the drones or males come; sexual eggs, which produce the workers which are imperfect females, from whom the princesses are selected which succeed the queen when she takes out her swarm and emigrates. A virgin birth, on the marches of the two kingdoms, keeps alive the memory of the ancient principle of parthenogenesis among creatures whose laws, labours, obedience, virtues, sacrifice, are such as to rank only below us in intelligence. Virgil long ago had said that bees had something divine in them because they produced their young in a condition of virginity.[1]

The discovery of parthenogenesis in the silk moth is a story worth telling. Castellet, an inspector of silk establishments for the kingdom of Sardinia, wrote to Réaumur that he had observed eleven silk moths to deposit eggs in a virgin condition. The naturalist replied by return of post, *ex nihilo, nihil fit*—from nothing, nothing comes. But the inspector was right. The silk moth is parthenogenetic; later the fact was established beyond doubt.[2] "In these distinct

[1] *Georgics* iv. 197, 219.

[2] *On a True Parthenogenesis in Moths and Bees*, by Carl von Siebold, translated by W. S. Dallas, p. 92.

sets of creatures,—rotifers, crustaceans, and insects,—parthenogenesis has become a confirmed physiological habit."[1] Professor D'Arcy Thompson, of University College, Dundee, has generalised this habit: "Many of the phenomena of regeneration, of budding and of parthenogenetic reproduction, seem to indicate that it is but a sort of accident, not the defect of a peculiar attribute, that prevents any single cell of an animal from reproducing the entire organism."[2]

The sea squirt or Tunicate is just over the border into the vertebrate class. It possesses three modes of generation: by budding, by germ and sperm produced and mingled in the same body, by alternation like that of the fern,—all which are of the nature of virgin birth. It is not without significance that just when Nature has arrived on the marches of a higher kingdom, when the incipient backbone has appeared, that in the function of generation she should look wistfully back and put such accents on virgin birth, as if to impress us with its primacy and importance. It is not a case of reversion but of persistence. Nature is always foreshadowing her future and never allowing us to forget her past, always showing us the links of her unity.

The soul of science sees visions, and it is by the

[1] *Evolution of Sex*, by Professors Geddes and Thomson, p. 174.

[2] "Regeneration of lost parts in Animals." *Mind*, No. xxxv.

scientific imagination that the foundations of science are laid. No keener vision has been obtained than that of the chemist who sees the unseen atom and weighs it, and who has begun to see electrons, many thousand of which compose an atom of oxygen. No larger vision was seen than that which Darwin saw, and evolution was to him a long vista as yet unverified. The creative idea in sex has dawned on the seeing scientific mind. Gegenbaur, one of our highest authorities, says that "the condition of distinct sexes has been borrowed from the condition of united sex." Professors Geddes and Thomson affirm: "The general conclusion is that hermaphroditism (a form of virgin generation) is the primitive condition."[1] And again: "Parthenogenesis (*i.e.* virgin birth) may be an organic ideal, but it is one which has failed to realise itself."[2]

The poet, the prophet, the philosopher—he also dreams and sees visions, and he has been beforehand these centuries, and the scientific man of yesterday must bring his gifts of the scientific imagination into conformity. Ruskin has said: "Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think; but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion—all in one." The Prophet at whose call the Western world waked up has presented us with the ideal of parthenogenesis on the projected lines of the world process: Ye do err not knowing

[1] *Evolution of Sex*, p. 79. [2] *Ibid.* p. 270.

the Scriptures,—the ancient thoughts of men,—nor the power of God,—the evolution waiting us,—for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.[1] The future fulfilling the suspended ideal, as indeed the many unrealised ideals in rudiment around us,—they all await the regeneration. The creation is to return to its primitive ideas in resplendent developments. This is vision over the hills into the sky of a new era of love and beauty and birth; and the present ever seeks to fulfil itself, and the future ever chants itself to us as blossoms chant the spring, and splendours as yet unguessed wait the present order of things, and the anthems of fluting and whistling birds every May sing of this day of grace to the wholesome mind.

[1] Matt. xxii. 29, 30.

CHAPTER VII

THE MIRACULOUS AND THE SUPERNATURAL

It was necessary to make a search into the ways of nature such as has been attempted, to obtain a fresh adjustment of the matter of virgin generation with our present knowledge. The conclusion we have reached disturbs our last century ideas of the miraculous and supernatural by which the Virgin birth of Christ is discredited to-day. Parthenogenesis, or generation in the condition of virginity, is a primary idea in the creation, a supreme function in the organic world, is the basal law from which the evolution of sex has taken place. Virgin birth in the human family is not a miracle in the sense commonly understood—that there is no known report or record of it; it is an actual working law in nature, of which we are not only a part, but of whose laws we are illustrious illustrations. It is not supernatural in the sense that it cannot be conceived among the possibilities of nature; it is an ordered, regulating principle over wide ranges of life. It is not a physical

miracle; it is a familiar function of physiology. In so far as the human family is concerned, the most that you can say is that it is in suspense. Nature is governed by use and wont, but in the spirit of them and not in the letter. She takes pleasure in variation. The virgin birth of Christ is exceptional, and we shall see presently how this large Exception finds admission among other large exceptions in the scheme of nature, creating epochs.

Professor Lobstein of Strasbourg University has recently given us a booklet, in which he counsels us to give up the Virgin birth on critical grounds, and assures us that this surrender does not imperil "the imperishable essence of the Christian faith."[1] Historical criticism has corrected many old ideas and put some things in their right place. But our author, in his booklet of 120 pages, is unsparing in his use of phrases such as these, almost on every page, "miraculous conception," "supernatural birth," "physical miracle," "supernatural generation"; meaning that which is "outside the ordinary working of the divine activity in the laws of the creation," the sense that tradition gives to them. He is unaware, as tradition is unaware, of the displacement that has taken place. Use for miraculous conception the phrase, a conception unknown in the human family, but common throughout the whole range

[1] *The Virgin Birth of Christ, an Historical and Critical Essay*, p. 38.

of nature. Use for supernatural birth the phrase, a manner of birth which is a supreme principle in the creation; use for physical miracle the phrase, a familiar function of physiology. Now these ideas would throw the strata of the professor's argument into disorder.

One quotation will suffice: "Had they (Matthew and Luke) possessed the slightest notion of a miraculous birth, they would have drawn up the genealogy of Mary and not of Joseph." Read, had Matthew and Luke possessed the slightest notion that the birth of Jesus was after the manner of a supreme law in nature, they would have drawn up the genealogy of Mary and not of Joseph. So put, the argument is an inconsequence. The writers drew up the genealogy for reasons into which we have to look. But there was no such notion as the miraculous and the supernatural in those days, such as we have had, for them to be directed or diverted by it in any way. Our present knowledge does not admit the application of the words miraculous and supernatural to the Virgin birth of Christ. Speaking generally, these words as once used are now mainly out of employment.

It is worth while laying some insistence on these words, as now the counters of lost values. The shrinkage is well seen in the perplexity in which Sir Henry Thompson finds himself, using these words, in a recent article in the *Fortnightly Review*.[1] He has given us his creed of a freshened

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, March 1902, p. 393.

theism in the felicitous words of Mr. Herbert Spencer: "But amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the absolute certainty that man is ever in presence of an Infinite and Eternal energy from which all things proceed." The problem of words before us is simple enough. If time and the finite are natural, the infinite and eternal are much too much above and behind and within nature that they surely require another word to express them. Supernatural is at hand.

With this confession,—much needed in our day for us to know where we are and how we happen to be there,—Sir Henry commends to us the prayer, "Thy will not mine be done"; and the anthem of adoration, "Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all." And yet Sir Henry tells us, he is compelled to reject Christianity on the sole ground that it professes to be "a supernatural revelation"; and he adds that the eyes of the educated classes will soon be "opened to the fact that no supernatural revelation has ever been made to man."[1] Sir Henry is actually making use of a supernatural revelation made to him and does not know it, perplexed by the antiquated words. In place of the word revelation use discovery, and we see that Sir Henry has discovered the Father in heaven and the Lord God, outside of the visible universe. In place of supernatural

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, March 1902, p. 412.

use spiritual, and we see that the Spiritual universe has discovered the Lord God to him, to which discovery he responds by prayer and praise. The Lord God cannot be included in the sphere of time and sense. To go past sun and sky into a correspondence,—is this natural or supernatural? There is no other word so fitted to express this responsiveness as supernatural or ultra-natural. What is the Bible but just such discoveries of the spiritual universe,—supernatural revelations,—made to select spirits.

Sir Henry has harked back to the eighteenth century, and is in the embarrassing company of no less distinguished a person than Bishop Butler. If such a platitude will be permitted, the Bishop was modern in his day and is ancient to-day, and Sir Henry is among the ancients of to-day. The Bishop, in his masterpiece, writes: "The relation in which we stand to God the Father is made known to us by reason; the relation in which we stand to Christ by revelation alone." To-day we say, they are equally revelations made to the human faculty and discoveries accepted by it, the one of God the Father, and the other of Christ in the Godhead. To-day we say, religion has always been both natural and revealed. It is natural because it is native to the human faculty; it is revealed because the unseen universe has shown itself to the native faculty. The revelation of Christ is only the most emphasised discovery. Never, in any wise, anywhere, will you find the unaided, insular

religion, always social forces working, and answering each other, making religion.

Last century has shifted our whole line of thinking about nature and super-nature. So frayed are old distinctions and so altered the values of words, that even Butler does not speak to us. Obviously they who find superstition in the word supernatural make a superstitious use of it; they who find a rationalism in opposing the natural to the supernatural are living in the forties of last century. The natural and supernatural belong to one system of things. Responsiveness to the spiritual universe is the common denominator of all the religions of the world, of Sir Henry's theism and Butler's christianity. The spiritual universe is supernatural or ultra-natural, super-rational or ultra-rational, whatsoever word we use. It is above and beyond and within and behind the visible universe. Over all is God, the Most High, the Spiritual Power. Revelation simply points to the society of forces, information received from the spiritual universe and answered.

Principal Rücker, in his presidential address to the British Association, 1901, said: "My main object is to show that the notion of ultra-physical entities and the leading outlines of the atomic theory are forced upon us at the beginning of our study of nature." Since this was written the discovery of radium has made more ultra the ultra-physical. We go past atoms to electrons, and there find 10,000 electrons in an atom of oxygen.

Faraday used to say that electricity was an all-pervading spirit. Visible physics passes into the ultra-physical; visible natural passes into the supernatural. Take notice in the quotation from Principal Rücker that the modern man is shirking the word supernatural and sheering away from ideas of the unnatural with which it has been encrusted. He speaks of ultra-physical. The legitimate meaning of these words, ultra-physical, supernatural, ultra-rational is essentially the same, and they are good negative notions. The religious mind supplies the equivalent positive and calls it spiritual. And the spiritual universe is in active intercourse with the visible universe. The two flow into each other, the one makes revelations and we entertain them. Over all and through all and in all is God, the Most High, the Holy Spirit.

Nature cannot take itself out of the supernatural; its whole economy reposes in the ultra-physical; it is the inevitable association. Man cannot take himself out of the highest supernatural, the Spiritual, for in Him we live and move and have our being. His social economy reposes on the spiritual universe. The old idea of the supernatural in the literature of the twentieth century is fast becoming a fossil, a superstition in the true sense of the word, which means a relic of the past, an idea not in agreement with present modes of thought.

A modern man keeps an open mind on the industry of a reverent criticism; and if it were

ascertained that the Virgin birth is a picturesque presentment, after the literary manner of an age, of the supernal place of Christ in history, it would not touch the permanent substance of the faith. But the subject must be approached without the dense deflecting medium of antiquated ideas of miracle. Historical criticism is overridden by the kind of science which has made a parish atmosphere for us, Huxley's protest notwithstanding. The length of way which an imperial science has brought us does not permit the words miraculous and supernatural to be applied to the Virgin birth of Christ. Speaking generally, these ideas have fallen on evil days in the shifted situation of thought. They are hardy annuals and will die hard, and we must take every opportunity of showing the ragged condition into which they have fallen. When the Virgin birth is seen in the scheme of nature, it will, at least, act as a brake against the headlong use of the words.

Indeed, the way of thinking about the supernatural, common both in the religious and outside the religious world, has lost orientation, as the antiquarian says of the piles of ruins in Rome of Bath and Circus, of which it is not easy to see how once they stood to the points of the compass, or how the details of the buildings were grouped into a whole. Modern thought has so shifted our lines of thought that our old ideas of the supernatural are brought to an impasse, and we have now to do, as mountaineers do, when they meet

with a blind mountain wall across their way—cul-de-sac so-called. They go straight up it to the watershed, where they see both sides of the country. So this day we find ourselves standing on the marches of two worlds and see that what we have called the natural and supernatural is but one system of things.

We proceed to put the exception in the Virgin birth of Christ into the scheme of Exceptions which we recognise in the order of nature, when spiritual Power has intervened to push nature into marked epochs. The poet, the seer, the sage have seen spiritual interference on the road the creation has come, and the trend of the scientific mind of our day is that way also.

CHAPTER VIII

SPIRITUAL INTERFERENCE IN THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

We have said that the Virgin birth of Christ is exceptional, and it is exception in the same sense as the exception which crops up in the epochs of the creation. It is of the nature of those interferences in the history of the creation which poet, prophet, philosopher have remarked upon, which have been accepted by men of science in our day as the only saving account of the widened horizons which have appeared in the making of the world. Nature has been regenerated and new epochs opened by an infusion of freshened elements from the imperial universe, the character of which we may not know, but the work done is visible enough and the strides taken are prodigious. The real world around us is the shining of worlds not only beyond the reach of sense, but unlike anything that we know of sense. It is the universe of spirit. We dwell on a small island powerfully affected by a vast ocean which girdles it. The

infinite interferes in the finite and brings it into larger issues. That which eludes sense is nearer the heart of reality than that which is within its reach.

In human nature, the poet, the prophet, the philosopher, the artist, the man of science have each his own place, with distinguishing features. They must make a fraternity and take counsel together and pool each his own gift into the common stock towards the understanding of the great Mystery which besets us and calls us into fellowship. If we are to think of the constitution and destiny of nature with the ideas of science only, our thinking is doomed to be parochial; if we are to speak of them only in the language of science, it will soon degrade into a patois. The venerable diction of theology, which has held the field this while, is now nearly a dialect. Interference from the universe of spirit is a religious idea and there is hope for progress when science has adopted it from an allied realm of thought. No one type of mind can copyright its ideas; they belong to every other. No one order of creed has the monopoly of authenticity. We should all know what o'clock it is or we will soon find it out to our cost.

Let us now see the interference in the cosmic process from the universe of spirit and the Virgin birth as one of them.

Mr. A. R. Wallace, than whom few have seen farther into the methods of nature, urges: "There

are at least three stages in the development of the organic world when some new power or cause must necessarily have come into action."[1] The three stages are when life appeared in vegetation, sensation in the animal, consciousness in man. They "probably depend upon different degrees of spiritual influx."[2] In this way, Mr. Wallace enforces the principle of interference from the side of modern science.

I will now illustrate this text and expand it, and we shall see stages before and after.

The initial interference has of old been named creation. Creation is essentially a poetic idea. It does not mean that something came out of nothing, for of nothing we know nothing; it means that the visible was an apparition of the invisible. The Semitic poet says the same that a hundred languages say, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Later, the Semitic mind, now informed with philosophy, said, In the beginning was the Logos or Word. The logos idea is a step higher to the creation idea, and the meaning is that thought and emotion in the hinterlands of the universe found expression in nature, became audible speech and visible vesture. This is the original interference, and we cannot get away from it. Darwin, possessed with the large conception of evolution, none the less, and so much the more, fell back upon the larger poetic idea of creation: "There is grandeur in this view of life,

[1] *Darwinism*, p. 474. [2] *Ibid.* p. 476.

with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one." Lord Kelvin takes his science back to this primitive intervention: "Science positively affirms creative power." Plato never tires saying that mind is the intervening "king of heaven and earth."

This is the general view of interference. But in the history of the creation we find ourselves standing on the margin of chasms, and the bridge of continuity which carries us over is spiritual interference. We shall find that this is a form of thought which will not let one go. When the programme of nature has to be materially altered and continuity conserved, it is done by the mediation of the environing spiritual universe. A brief, cursory review will enable us to understand this interference and to place the Virgin birth in the class of interference and exception.

The first chasm that faces us is that which divides the inorganic from the organic world. Natural selection by the method of struggle, producing variation and preserving the fittest, is the only known law of progress. It is plain that natural selection among atoms, or the electrons which are now supposed to compose an atom, could not have given birth to a mushroom or sponge. One atom gets no advantage over another, and is not raised into a favourable variation, by becoming a living cell. No cell could have an ancestral form in any combination of atoms. But the

passage from the inorganic to the organic, from atom to cell, matter to life, has been made, though our science has no clue to this romance of nature. We take the help of the poet and the prophet, who has said, The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and the early green of the primitive moss was called up. This implies interference.

Between plant and animal is a wide space traversed by the principle of interference. A struggle among plants and the killing out of the less fit by crowding or climate, or the attack of lichen or bacteria, is a grim ordeal appointed to them. But it is quite plain that in this ordeal a slug or insect will not be the favoured residuum of variation. None the less, animal life is linked with vegetation in the unity of the creative idea. Science has no account for this unity, but the poet has. The link is supplied, the continuity is found in a spiritual impregnation from without: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the creeping creature and fowl that may fly above the earth." This is another interference for another epoch.

A third critical epoch is that when consciousness, conscience, love, religion appear in the ascent. We take Mr. A. R. Wallace for our guide, and he argues that man's distinctive faculties could not have been developed in the stress of natural selection: "It (the Darwinian theory) shows us how man's body may have been

developed under the law of natural selection, but it also teaches us that we possess intellectual and moral qualities which could not have been so developed, but must have had another origin, and for this origin we can find adequate cause in the unseen universe of Spirit." The gulf has been spanned and unity obtained by the same Environing agency which has intervened in the other critical epochs. When Mr. Wallace affirms this interference, he has the imagination of the scientist and the poet in one, but he has been anticipated by another ancient poet in whom science lay implicit, as poetry is implicit in Mr. Wallace. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, of the already existing materials, and breathed into his nostrils the life of consciousness, and man became a living personality."

When the green moss peered over the marsh, a new birth had taken place in the physics of nature; when flowering plants appeared in the gloom of the non-flowering tree-fern, cycad, club-moss, a new birth took place in the plant family. When sponge and jelly-fish appeared among the first-born of animals, plant life was regenerated by animal life; when the backbone appeared, a new birth took place in the animal family. When man appeared a royal birth took place in the creation. Nature is regenerated by fresh infusions from the universe of spirit. Thus we explain the salient movements in the creation; thus reconcile poetry, prophecy, science in their story. These

imposing epochs have originated with the forces of freshened interference of the unseen universe.

Now the gulfs which had to be crossed in the evolution of civilisation are as gaping wide as any we have encountered in the history of the creation. Civilisation moves from more to more, and we shall see that the eventful movements which have tided it at critical junctures were impelled by spiritual intervention.

The genesis of man's higher nature is accounted for by an infusion of psychic elements into the physical from the universe of Spirit. The future of the initiation is committed to natural selection, but in this future great lifts occur, and these are reported as originating with intervention from the spiritual hinterlands.

On the farther fringe of civilisation we find the dim dusty peoples whom we rudely call savages, who have moved up from the stone and bronze age. Anthropology, in its researches among their customs, has come upon an antique form of thought by which some of these primitive tribes speak of their origin. One clan derives itself from a wolf, another from a rainbow, a third from the sun. These objects are known as totems, and totemic communities are known by a special social economy, and totemism is now a recognised chapter of social science. A school of theology sees human depravity in the totem; a school of anthropology has ready its doctrine of human absurdity. If this way of thinking were a little less followed, both

science and theology would come better speed. Man is a rational creature, and reason exists in infantile and crude forms; but the infant is not an absurd creature—rather most mothers think it most interesting.

The totem is a symbol to recall the memory of a Renaissance which had visited the people in a far back time, resulting in a bond of clanship, of a common language and common customs. The totem is the natural object—a mountain or rainbow—in the medium of which the vision of the Eternal and the resulting social cohesion and clanship were obtained. Round it grew sacred associations and a sacramental use, and the memory of the spiritual interference was kept burning. To speak of the Interference and the symbol of it as the father of the tribe is to awake the spirit of reverence and to make it picturesque. We understand the totem sacrament when we look back to times when we were moved by the ideal of our higher relations, excited it may be by the sight of a rosy dawn over the hills, or the fluting of the mavis perched on the top twig of the birch, or the brown bracken in the autumn brushwood telling of the summer that is gone, or a verse or parable burning into us from the Bible, which gave us a lead for many days and shaped for us something which had long lain shapeless. The dawn, the mavis, the Bible would be totems, a memory of a birthday of much meaning.

From the prairies of archaic peoples there were

lifted mountain chains, in great travail; from the misty clanships there arose the empires which make history for the first time. In the Egyptian, Assyrian, Hebrew, Persian, Greek, Roman, we see regenerations of the race. Their traditions commonly speak of spiritual interposition as the original impulse of imperial cohesion. We come nearer home, and shall be taken farther on our way if we scan briefly the birth of the Greek age and the Hebrew economy; the literature of the one is still our education, and the religion of the other is in the line with our own.

Athens is a monument of intervention from the world of spirit. Its foundations were laid by ancestors inspired by the goddess Athena; and the Parthenon, sacred to virginity, was the storied temple of the tradition that Greek civilisation had its beginning in a message from the environing spiritual Power.[1] Ruskin interprets Athena in this way. She is the "Spirit of life in material organism" and "she is inspired and impulsive wisdom in human conduct and human art."[2] She is a Power of the spiritual world which interposes in human affairs and inaugurates epochs of civilisation. Ruskin finds an analogy between the spiritual power of Athena and "the ministry of another Spirit whom we also, believing in as the universal power of life, are forbidden at our peril

[1] See what can be said of this goddess in Ruskin's *Queen of the Air*, passim.

[2] *Queen of the Air*, sect. 44.

to quench or grieve."[1] In the myth of Athena are preserved the tradition and perception of the Greek people that the eminence which they had climbed had an initial interference from the environing heavens. The myth has its parallel with the totem.

The head-waters of the Hebrew economy are tracked to the migration of Abraham, under the same specific impulse. The Semitic historian is poet and prophet and scientist, and he hit the inner truth of things when he traces Hebrew nationality to a spiritual interference of environment. He urges, in the vivid antique style, "The Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, into a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation." The Hebrew initiative is thus on parallel lines with the Greek, and both on the parallel of primitive totemism. There is a conspiracy among nations distant in time and space to tell the same story of a progressing civilisation by a spiritual initiation.

The next epoch of social evolution is the most forward and momentous in the history of the creation; nothing like it has been before and nothing has succeeded it, it stands unique and solitary. An evolutionary force of the first magnitude has been at work and is still working unspent, with the promise of better things. This is the Christian world of our Western civilisation.

[1] *Queen of the Air*, sect. 44.

We are so familiar with it, so deep in it, that it has shrunk into commonplace, and yet when we acquaint ourselves with the societies that preceded it, and the distance we have travelled, and the presented contrasts, we are amazed at the gulf crossed and the stride taken. Continuity has been maintained by the intervention of the same spiritual force, which now came by Jesus Christ. He is the Author, Cause, Force of the latest evolution. Sir Henry Maine has surveyed the social economy of all lands of all time. He writes, "It is, in spite of overwhelming evidence, most difficult for a citizen of Europe to bring home to himself the truth that the civilisation which surrounds him is a rare Exception in the history of our world."

Now observe that the civilisation which is a rare exception has a Cause corresponding which is also a rare exception, though neither exception mars the historic continuity. The philosopher who spoke of Athena to the Greeks was regarded as her messenger; Abraham and later Moses were also so regarded as divine messengers by the Hebrews. But Christ is the author, cause, force of the new Western economy, not a messenger of it. Apostles and missionaries were sent to announce the new Power that had entered into the affairs of the world. They were themselves the subjects of the interfering Power; Christ is the interfering Power, the Spirit of interference. The profound perception of this difference has given Him the

name of the Son of Man and the Son of God. And it is the scientific distinction between a causal force and the subject of it which Paul has anticipated when he says that the first man Adam was made a living soul, passively subjected to a spiritual interference; and the last Adam a quickening Spirit, actively interfering. Adam was supplied with a psychical nature, but Christ supplies the higher psychics to Western civilisation.

Western civilisation is a rare exception, the Force that drew it out is a rare exception. And now we observe that the manner in which the Cause entered the human cycle is an exception. No one of these exceptions breaks with nature, and we shall see that the coming of Christ by a Virgin birth is on the same plan of interference that we saw the coming of the organic world into the inorganic and of man into the organic.

Luke is a good example in the ancient world of the reconciling blend of poetry, prophecy, science. The physician has preserved the lyrics which rapt minds produced in an age when much had gone into confusion and many hopes had been born of a changed order. His science did not know that virgin generation is a regent principle in nature; the religion in him knew that the course of nature admits intervention from the world of spirit. He is convinced that the presence of Christ is an accentuated intervention in human history. He accepts the delicate facts kept in the confidence of a select circle, and accredited to him

by the lyrics which the passion of the time had woven, that an intervention of a Virgin birth had taken place.

The physician, the prophet, the poet becomes the historian, and the historian calls in the aid of poetry to tell his story. The memorials preserved by Luke have a character all their own, and his mind seems to have both the Greek and Hebrew strain. He makes a historic drama of the birth of Christ and weaves into it the lyrical emotions which the events had stirred in a select circle where was burning the hope of a better day in a fast decaying age. Lyrics are not made to order; they are the creation of fresh events and truths which awake passion and flash into cadence of beauty and force. Luke offers us the facts glowing with emotions. Art does not copy, like photography, the mere lines and forms of nature, the poet does not produce a web to the pattern set. The artist produces the memory, forecast, message, which nature has stirred in him, which he finds inwoven into her and in himself. A true historian does not sketch the mere outline of events as an annalist does. He gives emotion and thought to events; he hears what they have to say to him and reports their speech. To the drama of the birth of Christ, Luke gives the emotions which the Virgin birth has excited, and they warm and colour the scenes. The angelic tidings of the Virgin birth is put into the drama and partakes of the lyrical freshness, and it is informed with

an unconscious science. He places the event in the class of spiritual interference which seer and sage had seen in critical times in the process of the ages, and now is seen by the science of our day.

He puts the science and reverence of the Virgin conception into the poetry of the annunciation: "And the angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[1] We have found the same truth and feeling of overshadowing in the seer who wrote, The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and life came into dead matter; and the other who said, The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of a psychic life, and man became a soul of personality. Overshadowing is another word for the spiritual brooding which started life in the lifeless waters, and for the spiritual breathing which started personality in the mere man. Overshadowing, incubation, inspiration are synonyms for the intervention of the environing spiritual universe in the affairs of the creation. The Virgin birth is thus set into the procession of the ages.

The Virgin birth fits into the programme of nature by the principle of interference. Paul takes no notice of it, as he was preoccupied with the Incarnation, with which indeed it has no

[1] Luke i. 35.

necessary relation. To Luke, his companion, it appealed from every side of him. In the Renaissance of the Middle Age it profoundly affected the master minds and inspired a wealth of emotion, a perception of beauty, an ideal of purity, and an industry of technique for which we find no parallel. In Florence we find that every instrument which the artist could command—sculpture, painting, fresco, relief, terracotta—was played upon to tell of the Annunciation. It cast a spell over the masters—Giotto, Fra Angelico, Della Robbia, Perugino, Raphael—and they cast a halo over the beauty, love, purity of the family relation which was of no common service to the Latin races.

From the scientific point of view the Virgin birth is a revealing instance of nature's ways at critical junctures, when she receives a fresh access of force from the universe of spirit to take a new departure. We shall now see that the principle of incarnation which underlies the riddle of nature has been reinforced from the world of spirit by the Virgin birth of Christ to profoundly affect the human economy.

CHAPTER IX

THE INCARNATION AS A DYNAMIC OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

We must recall for a little the foregoing argument. The universe is a system of social forces. There is no such thing as a solitary force. Forces work in society, and we know them by the work they do in response to each other. Gravitation co-operates with a force on the earth and the response is the resulting orbit. The human body subsists by society with sun and earth; the mind by society with mind; the soul by society with the spiritual world conceived as Father, Creator, Spirit, the Infinite and Eternal. A just response makes the equilibrium we call life. Here is the secret of the universal fact of religion and civilisation. It is the resulting equilibrium of forces within and without; the human faculty coming to terms with a soliciting influx or pressure from the high heavens.

Here also is the simple secret of the Christianity which served itself heir to the old world. On the

broad basis of the society universal to the primitive races there came the specialised society with Christ, passed into the spiritual world. It impelled the evolution of the responsiveness which subsisted among Roman, Hebrew, Teuton, Celt, the evolution we call Christianity. It should not be difficult to determine the forces which, issuing from the person of Christ, have directed the rise and course of the Western world. Evolutionary history knows three forces of the first magnitude, and classes them as the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection force. Clear as daylight, mystic as the midnight moon, vocal with the voice of centuries, they meet us, and history has but one verdict upon the forces which have domiciled the European peoples into a wholly new social economy.

We have been so accustomed to speak of religion as a body of beliefs and doctrines, that we have almost lost the idea of the impelling forces of religion without which the religious life has no cause. The incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection are events in our Lord's life, and they have been fertilised into forces, when He passed into the spiritual world. After the education of the old world, the human faculty had expanded to receive these forces and to respond to them. This adaptation gave to the Western man his distinction and constructed the Western world. These events must now be treated as forces lodged in the Person of Christ in the unseen, as light, heat,

electricity are lodged in the sun. As each of these solar forces has its specific action and together support life, so each of these three forces draws its own lines on character and together organise the Christian life.

We are now concerned only with the Incarnation as a dynamic in the development of Western life. We repeat we know forces by the work they do.

1. The Incarnation has unified the sacredness around us. We have seen that the religion of all nations, civilised and uncivilised, has been ruled by the idea of gods, goddesses, spirits, many and varied, except among the Hebrews, and they had a hard struggle to find the unity of the Godhead. The pantheons of Greece and Rome have made us familiar with this way of looking at the spiritual world. Because we have gone far away from it, we call it superstition. The truth in the figuration of gods and spirits is easily named. The primitive mind saw a divineness —a divine beauty, call, reproof, wonder— in all the objects and aspects of nature, in every faculty and power in man. The visible world had elements in it of an unseen world, and men had an interest in it and were in correspondence with it. It was the way of idealising given to them, a stage of education for the race, and we must so recognise it. Ruskin has said of Greek thought: "Nothing is more wonderful than the depths of meaning which nations in their first days of thought, like children, can attach to the rudest

symbols, and what is to us grotesque or ugly, like a child's doll, can speak to them the loveliest things."

When this stage was crossed, this way of visioning the infinite spent, the incarnation in Christ was published and society with Him began, and this unified the uncharted divineness. A new relation was opened with the Trinity of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit. The stride taken was immense, it was a new world: the difference between the East and West is now past measuring. The many became One, the scattered parts of the divine were brought into a Whole, the broken lights were united into the one true Light which lighteneth every man who cometh into the world. The twilight of gods and goddesses was lost in the unity of the Godhead. Around us are the divinities of time and space and sense, and they are now seen as shadows of the one eternal Being. This vision has been domiciled amongst us by the incarnation in Christ, on Whom was seen the crown and original of the visible universe. In whom all things have their coherence.

God—who is God?—where is God?—what is God?—are questions in primer catechisms. In thought God is inconceivable, oppressively so. But the vision of Him is everywhere. In the names of God—the Absolute, the Boundless, the Almighty, Omnipresent—there is the unapproachable, though we feel we are somewhere on the awful watershed of two worlds, looking at mountains of snow and

ice and worshipping from afar. Infinite means not finite. We begin with miles that we can tape-line, with space that we can square, and we extend the boundaries and reach the paradox of space that is not space—the infinite. By eternity we deny time. We begin with the years we can count and then extend the figures, till they become the paradox of timeless time, time that is not time—the eternal. And yet it is to the Inscrutable that we build temples, set apart a priesthood, offer sacrifice, indite psalm and hymn, by which we push into the darkness and find some kind of light. God in thought has been a metaphysics—the One of One of Egypt, the I Am that I Am of Mount Sinai; God in vision has been the worship of the soul, worshipped with awe, worshipped with labour.

In the freshened reading of history which evolutionary principle has provided, we do not make disparaging comparisons or odious contrasts between stage and stage, epoch and epoch. To glorify the modern world at the expense of the classical, to contrast Christianity with preceding systems, is to glorify manhood and flout childhood and youth on which it reposes. Here is the youth of the world beautifully pictured by Virgil and philosophically by Tacitus, speaking for all that went before, in all time. Virgil, writing on the virgin generation prevailing among bees, urges—"Some have said that bees possess a share of the divine mind and draw the breath of heaven,

for they think that the Deity moves through all lands and spaces of the sea and deep of heaven."[1] Tacitus, in his memoir of Germany, writes of our own Teutonic ancestors: "The Germans, however, do not consider it consistent with the grandeur of celestial beings to confine them within walls or liken them to the form of any human countenance. They consecrate woods and groves, and they apply the name of deities to the abstractions which they see only in spiritual worship."[2]

God is a diffusive Essence in which all things share; we are one with the deeps and the heights. God is an Abstraction, metaphysical, impenetrable, unsympathetic, to which we are related, to which homage is due. God is the Soul of the universe. But the unity of the Godhead was a hesitating experience, always in the shade of a minority. It was there, but, save with a few select spirits, it was not a chant of the Eternal harmony. It was all that was given to our sires, and much and well they made of it; it did its work and guided the societies of antiquity till the times of fulfilment. They were waiting the evolution, and forces that lay restrained were asking to be liberated.

The enlargement came by Jesus Christ incarnate in a body. What the ancient world lacked was a hold of the personality of God, and this was revealed in the person of Christ in the enclosure of the body. Life as it moves upward meets with

[1] *Georgics*, iv. 219. [2] *Germania*, c. ix.

more of the opulence which besets it. Environment discloses more of its virtues; a richer influx flows into it. When the historic life of Christ was translated into the unseen universe, and intercourse was begun with Him, He was seen in the Trinity of the Father, Son, Holy Ghost. The sequel was the stable grasp of the unity of God. An unfolding of the religious faculty meets disclosures in the environment; rather the soliciting divine Pressure, always present, draws out the progressing faculty, to receive more of the unseen. The infinite Diffusion, the eternal Abstraction, the Soul of the universe was illuminated by the place of Christ in the Trinity, and the Godhead could now be conceived as Person, and we have a kindly access. The divinity in nature showed multiplicity, but the divinity in Christ showed us the oneness in God.

The Trinity has been regarded as a mystery which is to be left alone in its unsearchableness. A mystery is a mystery by the light which is on one side of it and the darkness on the other, just as the unknown is the unknown by the light which is on the known side. Mystery and the unknown would not have come into sight but for the light which has shown them to us. The light on the one side of the mystery of the Trinity, which has excited the evolution of religion, has come from the historic life of Christ passed into the heavenlies, and His presence there as the correspondent of the religious faculty and as a force fermenting

into us. Such is the clearness of this light, that the darkness on the other side of the mystery is now the inspiring hope of the future. The sky is blue because there is always a haze in the air; it would be black but for the haze. We would then be looking into the blackness of space. Now we see the blue of space. In Heber's hymn the known and the unknown of the Godhead have become the azure of a lyric:

> Holy, holy, holy, though the darkness hide Thee,—
> God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity.

The discovery of the Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was obtained in the white heat experiences of the early centuries. These experiences were the form which influx from Christ in the unseen had shaped. By this discovery the unity of the Godhead was firmly lodged in the Western mind, and hesitation had passed away once for all. The initial stride of Western progress was achieved by a firm grasp of the unity of the Godhead, and Western civilisation reposes on it, as the Hebrew character received its ply from the words: In the beginning the Eternal Power created the heavens and the earth. The Christian truth expressed in the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the direct evolution of the truth of the eternal Power, who created the heavens and the earth.

The Incarnation collects in Christ, as the First-born or Ideal of the creation, the vestiges of the

Divine mind profusely scattered in nature—the beauty, the law, the power, the wonder. It gathers also in Christ, as the Original and Ideal of man, the divine inherence seen in the faculties and virtues and affairs of men. The scattering effects of the lower incarnations in primitive religion have produced that tangle of myth, sacrifice, ceremony, custom which we include in the word idolatry. An idol is at first only a work of art which gives form to a divine inherence perceived in the phases of the outer world. Art helps us to make real the ideal, and then it reduces the ideal to commonplace; and when this point is reached, art becomes the idol, and idolatry is the capitulation of the mind in the struggle to sustain the invisible of God. It is not easy to conceive that men anywhere and in any wise really worshipped stocks and stones, but the exaggerated use of art we may call idolatry, when it becomes a disease, which may grow into a plague. The Incarnation in Christ has completely cured the mind of this disease by absorbing the producing germs. It is a force of unification, giving us a clear, clean sky in which to see God. In Catholic Christianity, where art is too freely used, the same scattering, dispersion, weakening may be seen from the same old source.

2. The Incarnation has unfolded in the human heart the sense of the kinship between God and man, joined two worlds with a flow of sympathy, and infused a kindliness into the social economy.

The incarnation in Christ met man after his education in the incarnations in nature. The early education had made religion a coercion, as it is still in the existing primitiveness.

Men have found it hard to be religious. As the highest endeavour of being, religion has been naturally an onerous undertaking, and the reaction from its burdens has been the scepticism to which the mind has yielded the world over, and the agnosticism to which it surrenders in the modern world. To make ourselves vivid with our higher relations, every resource has been used up of symbol, temple, sacrifice, art. To put ourselves into accord with the Will over us, no propitiation has been spared. To insure the soul for the career of spirits, a heavy premium of minute tasks, fasts, rules has been paid. Not more, indeed, than the value of being demands. The youth time of the world is like the youth of the individual, which, to be redeemed, demands a heavy toll of labour.

The advent of the Divine personality of Christ in the flesh has given the Eternal the experience of what it is to be human; it has established a kinship between God and man which has evolved and planted love into the religious sentiment, wholly changing the look of the unseen universe, and the relations of man to God. The awe of the infinite is softened and the distance upwards shortened and access made easy. The intervention of sacrament, ritual, sensuous assistance is reduced

to a minimum. Religion is felt as indigenous, and burdensome only by reason of its dignity. It becomes our own in freedom and love. The Incarnation has made religion homely, where it was stately and awful. It has effected a unity between the world of sense and time and that of the spirit.

Moral forces work slowly out into their issues because capacity enlarges slowly. We see in the Catholic Church, which ministers to the inferior mind of the Christian world, the worship of Mary, the assistance of priest, a heavy calendar of saints and gorgeous ceremonials in the perfection of art, by which it revives the clamorous entreaty of the older religion, and belabours them to find a passage into the spiritual world.

The most striking landscape seen from the Lake of Geneva is the mountain line of Dent du Midi, the Teeth of the South. Eight sharp peaks peer into the clear sky, without any rivals to distract the eye. They have the look, in bare rock and precipice massively buttressed, of the savagery which awes us in Alpine scenery. They are eloquent of the solitude which often overcomes us with the loneliness we brought here, and which we will carry out with us in the lonely hours of death. In this scenery we feel the strength of the antiquity in which we seem to have our share, while the heights and the snow and the ice tempt us to try our forces against the relentless forces of nature. So is religion, in terror and fascination.

But you will sometimes see these austere peaks of snow draped in a mist like a bridal veil, which the afternoon sun turns into a rose pink, while the mass of the mountain, holding up the peaks of the sky, is a charming purple, and the sky above is a sapphire streaked with fleecy and feathery vapour, pure white. Now awe and magnitude and heights have passed into the human sympathies. We are one with the heights and with the primal elements. So is religion, since the incarnation of Christ gave it the grace of our kinship with God. We do not go to Mount Sinai to hear the decrees of the Almighty published in thunder and lightning, and voices which they who once heard entreated that they should not be spoken to them any more. We are come to Mount Zion in communion with the living God and with Jesus Christ, the incarnate Mediator, and the spirits of our departed fathers. The communion of this kinship has discovered to us the home from which we have come to be incarnated here, and to which we are returning attuned by this wonderful cycle in the flesh. The divinity of Christ means that there is a divineness in the creature and a humanness in God. We hear in our souls the songs of the heights and deeps of existence.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in every respect

tried like as we are, and yet did not sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in our times of need.

3. The incarnation discovered for us the unity of the race and effected a quick change in the relations of man to man. It was the gospel of equality, not the petty equality of circumstance, but of the inner essence and high destiny of man, —of essential nature. Mr. Lecky urges, "the first aspect in which Christianity presented itself to the world was as a declaration of the fraternity of men in Christ."[1] This was a grace imported from the incarnation glorified in the unseen. It is not an abstract truth. It is a force taking effect.

Slavery lay at the very foundations of ancient society, without which it was not workable. It is a natural institution, the dependence of the weak upon the strong, the incapable upon the capable, and the poor we shall always have in the land. The incarnation promised the evolution of it. Paul sends a letter to Philemon, a slave owner, by the hands of his regenerated runaway slave, saying, "Receive him, now no longer a slave, but as a brother beloved in the Lord." The feeling in that simple sentence sapped the ground from under this not unnatural relation, and determined its future career, which lingered for a thousand years in the Christian period as serfage and

[1] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. p. 17.

feudalism, and was dissolved. When it appeared in the modern world in the same character as in the ancient it was dissolved in blood. The American War of Secession cost 450,000 lives, and the forces arrayed on one side were permeated and arrayed by the incarnation idea.

It comes to us with a shock of surprise that the sentiment of exclusiveness should have played so important a part in the history of Morals. Every tribe, race, nation was entrenched in an isolation of privilege, indifference, or hostility, and kept at bay every other which did not speak the same language or observe the same customs. Kindness was shown within the tribal territory, outside of it none received consideration. The Greeks looked with something like contempt upon all nations who did not speak the Greek language, and scorned them as barbarians. It was given to Rome to develop the idea of political unity, which is a step forward, but as yet it had a feeble moral element, for mostly it was exploited to carry the wealth of the nations to Rome. In ancient societies, exclusiveness is the crack which in various crossways runs athwart the unity of the race.

It was a daring innovation when it was announced that there was neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is seen in all men and is the same to all men, all men have the same essential nature as His. There is a divinity

in all men, all are equal, all are brothers. The race is an unfissured unity. A higher civilisation began its career with the opposing sentiment of inclusiveness. To take every tribe and language into sympathy, kindness, kinsmanship,—to owe no man anything but to love one another,—this was progress initiated by the forces of the incarnation, imported from the heavens.

Now it is noteworthy when this stage was reached, the sentiment of Christian exclusiveness was developed. The Middle Age presents to us an imposing spectacle of a spiritual unity and subjection of all the European nations to a theocracy under the Pope. "The two great ideas which expiring antiquity bequeathed to the age which followed were those of a world monarchy and a world religion."[1] We have seen that modern history began with the memories of the incarnation, for on Christmas Day, 800, the Pope crowned Charlemagne Emperor of all Europe, and the world monarchy and the world religion began their career. From this moment, with modern history begins also the career of an exclusiveness, more grim and ruthless than those which had preceded it, in the interests of which rivers of blood have flowed.

The Papacy exists to this day, having shed not a feather of its claims to prerogative. The Papacy has its roots in the antique idea of exclusiveness. It is a human need, and its pre-

[1] Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*, p. 91.

rogative is allowed by human nature, which always knows what it wants. In the Thirty Years' War this exclusiveness engaged the Evangelical revolution of the sixteenth century in a flood of blood. And, strange to say, though it is quite natural, the Evangelical communities, born of the revolution which resisted the Papal privilege, assumed it themselves. Scotland tried to force Presbytery on England and got hated by Milton for it. England tried to force Episcopacy on Scotland, driven by the cleaving sentiment of a privileged divine mission and authority, when the moors of Scotland lay in pools of blood. The biologist can say nothing against it; it is elementary to human nature. Only we can now locate it. It is a lower stage of evolution and asks to be lifted. It spells the inferior species of vitality.

Exclusiveness is with us to-day, outside Rome and outside the Churches. The powerful and cultured Anglican communion denies validity to the Christianity of the non-Episcopal communities. Canon Henson has called loudly to the Church of England to abandon what he has called "that cruel doctrine," and "that rigorous and exclusive doctrine," of prerogative. He will not be a voice crying in the wilderness, for England is on the path of progress, and she will respond to the good Canon, perhaps not to-day or to-morrow, but soon. There are small sects of good men amongst us who leave all Christendom to unratified mercies.

The incarnation has not done its perfect work. Outside the Churches we have science claiming privilege and precedence as against poetry, philosophy, prophecy, which it dooms to superstition and delusion, while modern rationalism scarcely allows a shred of reason to the world outside its pale, which is seen floundering in mythologies and falsehoods and senile prejudices. Evolution has not taken effect, and reason has gone crazy.

We understand Lucan, the Roman rationalist, who belongs to the ancients. He tells us that the Druids used to say that "death is an incident in a long career," and then adds, in the happy arrogance of infallibility which every school of thought seems to enjoy, "happy are they in their delusion."[1] Every one is deluded except he who affirms delusion of all mankind. Infallibility is a resounding note in the ancient world. But modern culture is out of its latitude with exclusive claims. When a school or sect in our day, says, No doubt we are the men, it has spent its capital. We are wanting a parliament of poet, artist, philosopher, prophet, mystic, man of science and the plain workaday man to promote a Bill, —the Riddle of the Universe,—to bring into one large unity the tributes of various schools. The great work of our day is to bind the ages, each to each, by natural piety. We have to wind up the old business of such words as delusion,

[1] *Pharsalia*, 442-447.

mythology, superstition, and their kind. Science and reason no doubt can supply a little more of iron to our blood and keep us from being anæmic, but it is better always to have much of heaven in our affections to unify and reconcile the race. The incarnation furthers us in this direction, puts a high value on human thought and life everywhere.

The biretta of Apostolical succession is only the sacred guise which exclusiveness takes on in the Christian economy. A student of social science finds no fault with it, who sees its title-deeds. It belongs to human nature and the cosmic process, in its lower stages. Nations have found it necessary everywhere and in all time to hedge themselves round by a protective device. But we can now get at it. We know what it is as we compare Germany and Austria, England and Spain, Scotland and Ireland, North America and South America. It spells the lower grades of civilisation. Apostolical succession is the protective exclusiveness of the lower grades baptized into the Christian Church. The incarnation has not worked deep down enough.

It is well worth noting the evolution of Scottish Calvinism out of exclusiveness into the ideal affection of fraternity which has taken place in this living generation. Though Scotland attaches no sacredness to Christmas Day, and the day is not observed except for family meeting, it has held fast to the truth of the incarnation and enlarge-

ment has followed. Dr. Whyte of Edinburgh is a noted and trusted preacher of an unflawed Puritanism. He has during the last twenty years taught, preached, published, what he calls "Appreciations." He has produced an appreciation of Bunyan and Samuel Rutherford, the English and Scotch covenanters; it was followed by that of Bishop Andrewes and William Law of English episcopacy; then of Böhme, the German mystic. These were followed by an appreciation of Santa Teresa, Cardinal Newman, and recently of Father John of the Greek Church. Each volume contains a sympathetic story of the life, and extracts from the saintly writings, of these men. Cardinal Newman wrote to Dr. Whyte: "I ought to have expressed my sense of the service you are doing to the cause of Christian charity by your quotations from authors external to your communion."[1] Dr. Whyte has come to, and carried Scotland into, this evolution of fraternity and inclusiveness, not by generalising himself. The detachment of mind which holds by no speciality disperses its strength and almost palsies action. He keeps fast by his own Puritan and Scottish particularity, and he opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He would think scorn to let in by a back stair those who are not Presbyterian or Puritan. Those of us who have known Scotland fifty years ago

[1] *Newman: An Appreciation*, by Alex. Whyte, D.D., p. 250.

know the distance we have travelled in company with Dr. Whyte.

The ideal of the Divine unity, the Divine kinship in man, the human equality, the racial inclusiveness, which the incarnation works in us, can go no farther, and it is on the heights of this ideal that we can alone catch the song of the angels and respond with the refrain, Glory to God in the highest,—peace on earth, good will to men.

Glory to God in the highest,—the birth in Bethlehem is the most splendid showing of the unity of the Highest and of the kinship of the Highest with man. Peace on earth,—the incarnation is also a splendid showing of the unity of the race, binding man to man in respect and sympathy. We have seen this splendour and peace. There remains for us to see the good will towards men, to find the essential worth of human nature, the human asset, in its very lowliness, and vast reserves of capacity. God has pleasure in man; human nature has a popularity in the universe; these are shewings of the Incarnation, none the less for the serious abatements.

CHAPTER X

THE INCARNATION AS A DYNAMIC OF WESTERN CIVILISATION—(*continued*)

We have seen three elements imparted to the human faculty and funded into Western civilisation, issuing from the incarnate Person of Christ in the Eternal. These are the unity of God, the kinship of God with man, and the unity of the race. They lay in shade in the ancient world and have been brought into a generous light by the new relation of man to the Eternal. At the risk of repetition we shall affirm that beliefs about them are merely the literary formulas for the work done by social forces. The refrain of our argument is that we are speaking to a dynamic of interacting forces and the containing results. There are other elements released into the social economy, traceable to the same force, and we pursue them. I continue the numeration begun in last chapter.

4. The incarnation has evoked a sense of the essential worth of human nature. There is a look of man which is disappointing and depressing, and

it is easy to see it. Man looks a little creature, thinking of little things, aiming at little things, doing little things, dispersed among little things. The emperor Hadrian was a scholar and artist, and he built the famous mausoleum, now the Castle of S. Angelo, to receive his remains. He used to address his soul: *animula, vagula, blandula*, little airy soul, vagrant little creature, dear little thing, playful with his disappointment with himself. The emperor Septimus Severus said, *omnia fuit et nihil expedit*, I have been all things and nothing profits me. If the masters of the world were so small, what must the citizens around have thought of themselves, ever on the edge of poverty, and the slave who outnumbered the citizen. The modern world is not to be behind in the person of Frederick the Great, who spoke of his subjects, *diese verdammte Race*, this accursed race.

In the early stages of moral feeling there is a barbarity scarcely conceivable by us, and we ask what it really meant. Plato and Aristotle gave their sanction to infanticide, Lycurgus and Solon legislated for the practice of it. Infanticide was also the vice of the Roman world. Plutarch tells us that in one of the perpetual feuds between Athens and Sparta, 2000 prisoners were taken by the Spartans and put to death. The Athenian commander is represented calmly awaiting his doom, saying that if he had won, the fate of the Spartans had been the same. Doubtless the struggle for existence is mainly responsible for

this cruel militarism, and this struggle has demanded heavy sacrifices. But what lay behind it was a feeble sense of the value of human life. It was a vulgar, shallow, petty thing, with little meaning and less repute,—so it looks to the dusky eye, the unevolved sympathy.

The Romans reached the highest point of ancient civilisation; they produced a code of laws which is the basis of our judicial system. Yet we find them utterly callous towards human life. The ruins of the Colosseum at Rome show the most colossal building ever raised for an atrocious amusement. Sixty thousand spectators could find seats in it, and they came there to see hundreds of captives and slaves set to fight each other, tear and hack and kill each other, or to fight and tear, and be torn by, wild beasts. The Roman citizen found his evening's pastime in the bleeding wounds, writhed limbs, and death agonies of human beings. It is the most hideous spectacle which human civilisation has presented, and we wonder how it came about. Perhaps the elemental glamour in danger, tragedy, savagery and fierceness for mastery,—an ancestral strain,—may account for it. Anyway, behind it was a sense of the insignificance of human life.

The incarnation shed a light on human nature which showed its eternal quality, which developed an insight which, in its turn, developed moral feelings and healed the barbarity. It harmonised human greatness and littleness. It discovered

the secret of a great destiny for man, and it was the lamp lighted in the manger of Bethlehem which searched it out. Mr. Lecky urges: "This minute and scrupulous care for human life and human virtue in the humblest forms, in the slave, the gladiator, the savage, or the infant, was indeed wholly foreign to the genius of paganism. It was produced by the Christian doctrine of the inestimable value of each immortal soul."[1] The finer spirits of the ancient world had felt and trained the humanitarian instincts, but they were unheeded,—out in the cold of a small minority. Precepts can only be practised impelled by social forces, and they were working feebly at this stage of the cosmic process. But they came to the front. The Emperor Theodosius, with his staff of officials, appeared at the cathedral of Milan, on his return from Salonica, where he had ordered a massacre of the inhabitants. Ambrose, a bishop known for his extreme meekness, refused him admission to the cathedral till he had expiated his crime. The Emperor, and now the Roman Christian world, as yet uneducated, were amazed at the daring attitude of the bishop about a matter so commonplace as the slaughter of human beings. It was the flashing up, in one of the humblest of ecclesiastics, of a new sense in human nature for long in abeyance. The everyday man is worthy; the everydayness of his life is valuable beyond all value.

[1] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. p. 34.

In the Munich Gallery there is a quartette of paintings by Murillo known as the Beggar Boys. They are pictures of Spanish boys and girls sent out to beg and sell fruit. Their clothes are threadbare, through rents the skin is seen, the foot looks out of the shoe or is shoeless, hair as if it was not familiar with the comb. They are resting for the mid-day meal, a basket of grapes and melons is beside them; they are counting the money they have earned and begged, munching a crust with gusto, looking with rapture at the fruit which is to be one of the courses of the meal. Their faces are all aglee; their clothes and conditions give them no concern; they are not conscious of meanness; it is all nature. There is a fifth painting of this series of a grandmother picking the head of a ragged boy, who is sitting half pleased and half amused, which must remain undescribed in its pathos, humour, dandruff.

Life like this could be easily made to look sordid, if the soul of sordidness was in the artist. But the master spirits of the Renaissance had felt new forces at work, and the freshened imagination saw human life in the beauty of the nativity, the Madonna, the adoration of the child. All human life stood transfigured before them. The artist who has thrown a charm round these beggar boys had felt in that boy nature, so forgetful of its lowliness, so bubbling with a joy within, the gladness which the universe of existence had in them, and the innate splendour of the incarnation

idea when it had taken even this shape, which this childhood had brought with it here, which could not be put by even in this strife with its blessedness. Murillo anticipates in art the poetry of the nineteenth century, which saw this same vision of childhood, in Wordsworth's ode :—

> The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar :
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home.

So eloquent was the discovery of our greatness in our littleness that infanticide and the massacre of prisoners of war became a crime, and the massive ruins of the Colosseum to-day are a monument to the forces working. So vividly did the new world realise the immense worth of human life and its destiny ; so revolutionary has been the change and lift in human feelings ; so strange the turn in the cosmic process.

For natural selection works through utilities and the useless it puts out. The incarnation in Christ has made man more a miracle in nature. He gives to natural selection a miraculous turn. He develops it into spiritual selection, by going farther into the universe of spirit. Spiritual selection compels men to look after the weak, the poor, the fallen, and has made criminal the attempt to arrest the population. It does not eliminate

faulty types but cherishes them, it looks after the cracks and mends them. Natural selection gave a feeble sanction to compassion, self-denial, self-sacrifice; spiritual selection has developed these virtues with marked success, fostered by communion with the incarnation. The most developed man of the Middle Age, representing the type which had begun its career a thousand years before, was St. Francis of Assisi. "He listened to them to whom God Himself would not listen,"—such is the record which sums up the life on which has been fixed the gaze of centuries. He made love to man and self-forgetfulness in his service popular, which he received by communion with the incarnate Christ. It is a revolution of the first magnitude. Spiritual selection modifies natural selection impelled by the awakened sense of the essential worth of human nature.

5. The Incarnation of Christ has discovered for us the spiritual quality which lies imbedded in our industries and drudgeries. The look of them does not show any such quality, the look of tearing the stubble field with the plough, of buying and selling, planing wood, clerking sheets of paper with musty law or trade letter, and there is a step lower than this of sheer manual labour. The look is menial, and the feeling we give to labour such as this is to escape from it as quickly as possible. We accept it because the matter of our daily bread is in it, that there is anything beyond or behind is dubious, and is not discernible till light

from on high illumines our eyes. As is well known, in the ancient world of Rome this order of work was handed to slaves, while the citizens found work in the senate, in the army, or in amusements.

Our Lord passed into His baptism from the workshop of Nazareth, and slowly there has dawned upon us the spirituality of common labour and the relation of it to a higher order of spirituality. There is no abruptness in the stages of life, each part is linked to another by a graduated spirituality. Christ redeemed His life by obedience to the law of labour, and was equipped for the redemption of the world. Obedience to the law of labour is effacement of self, and self-sacrifice is the inner law in the cosmic process. We are all used up in the service of the universe, and it is well for us to see it and consent to it, for there are great things in it.

The period of the Renaissance is one of the very marked periods of Western history. The Renaissance spells Art, expresses itself in light and shade, colour, line, values. It is like landscapes which haunt us with suggestions and spirits of other worlds. This section of time is very valuable to the historian, for the causations of history are very vividly set before us. It will not allow us to overlook the sequence of cause and effect, and you cannot stand outside of it. I will employ it to illustrate my argument of cause and effect, of force and the work done by force. The

incarnation lives in effects, and they engage the imagination of the artist, and the vision of the poet and artist is always true to the "primal sympathy" of things.

Murillo put into one of his larger and more striking pictures the new meaning in our common everyday labour which, for a thousand years, had been illuminated by the incarnation. The picture is in the Louvre of Paris, and is known as the Miracle of San Diego, the figures in which are life size. A door opens, and two noblemen and a priest enter a kitchen. They are amazed to find that all the kitchen maids are angels: one handles a waterpot, another a joint of meat, a third a basket of vegetables, a fourth is stirring the fire. The inner content of man as man, the toiling drudging man, apart from accidents, is seen to have an angel quality, and the toil and drudgery to qualify for the angel destiny that awaits him. This is a vision behind the surface of things, and it is the vision which unevolved nature obscures. It is wanted, the rather in our day, when the seamy side is all that some eyes can see.

When we have left behind the zone of wood in an Alpine ascent, say at 7000 feet, we meet with bare rock, boggy waste, boulders, débris, screes, relieved by the snowy peaks and massive outlines of the mountains on the horizon, such as you see on your way to the Görner Grat from the Riffel Alp, or from the Albula Pass to the Crasta Mora in the Engadine. But if you will

look beside and around, you will find that you are in a rare garden. This waste is strewed with lowly plants which cluster together for warmth, which crouch down against the wind, which hide themselves under rocks and crevices from the storm, some which face all weathers, and they take on, in this struggle for existence, the loveliest of colours. You will pick up the mauve buttercup on the edge of the glacier, a yellow crucifer, a red saxifrage, the golden groundsel, the violet aster, the azure gentian, the blue borage, the pink campion as a tuft of moss, the white chrysanthemum the sire of our greenhouse gorgeous plants, the yellow green cyphel, the woolly willow prostrate on the ground,—and these are only samples which delight the eye of the botanist.

Just such, in the wilds and wastes and untrodden ways, we shall meet with men and women, in lowly guise, hard lot, rude scenes, but the eye couched by the incarnation sees the colour patches from which looks the Eternal waiting the future. This vision is the secret of the vast missionary enterprise at home and abroad which the churches have undertaken. It is the natural outcome of the forces released by the incarnation into our Western civilisation.

6. The incarnation brings into relief the place and worth of the body. We know the comeliness of the human form, and the pleasure and passion it evokes, and the suggestion it awakes of the wider order of things to which we are related.

Pleasure in man's form inspired the art of Greece, passion in the woman's form inspired the art of Italy. The place of the body is, however, a discordance. At its youthful best, the mind is crude and the soul caged in sense. When its comeliness is on the wane, we arrive at wisdom, experience, and such mastery in affairs as our faculties allow us—a discrepancy which jars upon us. Seemingly, body and soul, the visible and invisible of us, do not fit, and worse, body and life do not move on parallel lines. The mature body and the mature mind are never in company. As life augments in capacity, the body is shrivelling, parting with its heat. Nature even casts away the body in childhood, youth, manhood, and ripe middle age, as a thing of nought. It is treated with scant respect by the laws of nature, not to speak of the diseases which infest it. Body and soul never come to an understanding, while body and life are at feud.

The discordance was keenly felt in the ancient world. Plato speaks of the body as making a living tomb for us, and the Stoics and Neo-Platonists, who had attained the highest level of spirituality, spoke of it as a corpse we have to drag about all our days. To find unity and symmetry was always a problem in the ancient world: unison at best was an unhappy compromise. Both in the East and West, asceticism prevailed. To mortify the body, not to marry, to keep aloof from the world, to make desert places a hermitage, to live on charity, on locusts and wild honey, this

was the ideal life. John the Baptist appears a phenomenal ascetic, and he was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel. He introduces the reconciling kingdom and inducts Christ into it, but is not of it. Christ announces the new temper. Nearly His first public appearance is at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, and He makes wine for it and blesses the bridal holiday. He mingles in the world so freely that it felt scandalised for it. He meets at the outset the amazed inquiry, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? To which the ready answer, How can they fast in this bridal season? In His incarnation soul and sense make one harmony, the two worlds are wedded together, and now that the incarnation is glorified, it communicates this unison as a gift to the new age. It is the distinctive ideal of the age.

We must notice that when the early forces which planted Christianity got weakened, this discordance again appeared, and now with exaggerated activity. Asceticism is developed as a plague in the third century of the Christian era, and makes a very painful chapter of an obscure pathology. In the austerities, tortures, macerations, which such superior men as Paul the hermit, St. Anthony, Jerome, Simeon Stylites, subjected the body, and the thousands who followed them into the Egyptian deserts and other retreats, we have a record of aberration of which there is not the like. The reverence which was given to the

hermit class by those who could not join them is as remarkable as the fanaticism itself, while preachers of the type of Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom egged on the movement by their eloquence. This phrensy is no doubt a homage to the open vision of the unseen, and our destiny there, which had come with Christ, which so unhinged the mind.

When this delirium of the third and fourth centuries had spent itself, there arose the orderly institution of monasticism, which covered all Europe in the mediæval times and served a purpose, and to this day it is an inseparable adjunct of the Romish system, based on the felt disharmony between soul and body, this worldliness and other worldliness. So great a soul as Francis of Assisi, who made monasticism beautiful by the service of man, afflicted his body with repulsive austerities. In supreme moments he felt the jar and fret, and with pathetic humour wrote, "I have sinned against my brother the ass," meaning his tortured body. He recovers himself, and in a lucid moment asks himself, "Whether he who had destroyed himself by the severity of his penances could find mercy in Eternity." He died at the age of forty-four. So harassed have we been, in this era of misery, with the disparity between body and soul, this world and the world yonder. The Latin races have not developed to receive the full force of the incarnation.

Now it is significant that in the Renascence of the sixteenth century, when an immediate personal society with Christ was found, the conventual system was at once felt a discordance, and the dissolution of the monasteries was begun. As soon as the soul had moved into the region of a clarified communion with Christ, soul and body became a pertinence and the two worlds an adjustment. Ever since, the absence of monasticism has been maintained, and the very appearance of an attired monk in our streets is felt as a blot on the social landscape, and he keeps himself in lands which affect mediævalism. We seek the cause and it is not far. It is the superior quality of responsiveness to Christ, and in this contact the incarnation force works a larger work. We emphasise the incarnation as the working force of this finer harmony between soul and body, and the finer congruity of the two worlds. They who have departed from the Renascence communion will revert to Romanism or pessimism, and "this poor rib-grated dungeon of the holy human ghost" will be again in evidence, looking out from between the bars of its cells.

The high function of the body is to minister to the soul, and therefore we must care for its food and cherish its nerves, and give it health and scope that this office may be well performed. We keep it under not for the sake of keeping it under, but that it may fulfil rightly its function. The senses have their destiny in qualifying us for

the spiritual estate. We are here specially to qualify for our high estate in the appointed medium of sense; we can get our quality in no other way. The incarnation is a mediation of sense. Death comes in youth, manhood, middle age, because the body has finished its incarnate ministry. Death comes in the medium of disease and agony that the incarnating senses may supply a quality to the soul. We now live full in the life of the world and of sense adjusted to the life of the soul by the grant of a harmony imparted by the Incarnation force. It is the dynamic of the concord.

We detect the signs of two orders of civilisation under the same impulse, the Latin order to which monasticism is necessary, the Teutonic which refuses this company. To make celibacy or poverty a virtue is to drop on the lower plane. It is easy to be John Baptist, who could not grow, not so easy to be Jesus Christ, in whom are the forces of an unending growth. John was visional enough to see this inner principle. He said, He must increase and I must decrease.

7. The magnetism in this force entered, from the nature of things, into the sphere of sex. It lifted the order of ideas and feelings which ruled the family life on to a superior plane, imparting spirituality, unity, permanence to the marriage bond, and that which was the property of the finer spirits of all ages became the common property of whole nations. To love one only, and

to be spent in that centred love, soon became a general capacity, and it pressed legislation in its interest, which soon gave the force of law and custom to the life-long union of one man and one woman. When this affection was developed it changed the whole face of society. It was a regeneration of the world's life and character. Woman came into her rights, motherhood into her kingdom, and childhood into bloom. Christmas day thus became a family festival, while remembering the birth in Bethlehem. Sex has acquired the purity like unto that of flowers and children, the primal purity of nature.

It is not necessary here to enter into detail regarding the domestic relations in the ancient world. Sufficient to say, that fugitive attachments and irregular connections were adopted into the social order, and respected as a necessary part of the system. A very distressing chapter this.[1] Strange to say that the unified family affection is not found in advanced civilisations of Greece and Rome, but among our Teutonic ancestors in the German forests. Tacitus presented these peoples as a model to the Romans. He writes: "Their (the German) marriage code, however, is strict, and indeed no part of their manners is more praiseworthy. Almost alone among barbarians they are content with one wife."[2] Of the men, he

[1] Lecky's *History of European Morals* gives the distressing details, vol. ii. chap. v.

[2] *Germania*, c. 8.

writes, "they even believe that the female sex has a certain divineness and prescience" — *aliquid divinum.* Of the women, "they love not so much the husband as the married estate."[1] We must have often wondered why there was not an eleventh commandment,—Thou shalt not have more wives than one,—obedience to which would have added a cubit to the moral stature of the Hebrew race. Statutes are not prescribed, nor can they be obeyed before the truth and feeling in them are felt. The ideal of the sex relation was as yet a rudiment, partially developed in isolated communities.

The problem of sex was solved and closed when the affection of a life-long union between one man and one woman was developed. By this gospel of marriage Western society was regenerated and reconstructed. The marriage ideal was found, and there is no other, and we found it in the virgin birth and incarnation of Christ. We do not open the question again, for that is to go back to the beggarly elements in the rudiments of the world. To love one maiden only, and make her the pride of all our summers, and in death to feel her the spirit of mysterious summers to be, this is the unified affection which has settled down into our civilisation, and into the human heart. It marks off Western societies from all that preceded them in the old world, and from all that is outside of them to this day.

[1] *Germania*, c. 19.

We have now before us an interesting scientific inquiry. We find that the pure theism of the old Hebrews and of modern Mahometans is consistent with a plural family relation, and they who in our day are returning to theisms and monisms should take good note of this fact. We find that in the most advanced civilisation of Greece and Rome a unified relation was only the dream of the higher spirits. Thus we come to seek a cause for the renovated family relation which came with the Christian era. Christianity is only a name for a cluster of causes, and we have to discover what special cause has passed into this effect. Professor Lancaster affirms: "Science may be defined as the knowledge of causes." "All knowledge which is deep enough to touch the causes of things is science; all inquiry into the causes of things is scientific inquiry." [1]

Here is a change wrought in the very foundations of human society, which has a well-known beginning in historic time. Where and what is the cause? As a matter of course, we read it in the laws of the Christian society; it is in the New Testament. But laws are not causes, only expressions of them, and are not even obeyable till the truth and feeling which they express have filtered down into the roots of the human mind, as our Lord said of the plurality of wives in the Hebrew economy, that it was permitted by reason of the hardness of heart which had not received truth

[1] *Advancement of Learning.*

and feeling of the higher sort. Truth and feeling in human nature have a defined cause in social forces. The truth and feeling of a life-long union between one man and one woman came by the compelling force in the virgin birth of Christ, which came into operation when His Person, regenerated by this manner of birth, had passed into the heavens and became an interacting force to which we became responsive.

Clear proof of the force operating in this special direction is found in the art of the Renaissance. The vision of the artist had seen it, and the artist sees intensely what the people see in a diffused way. The Renaissance was the fallow soil collecting these centuries on which a spiritual garden flowered, as later, on the same soil, the cornfields of the Reformation grew. The Annunciation, the angel announcing the virgin conception, the Madonna, the beauty of Mary, the Nativity, the worship of the magi, became the ever-recurring theme of the masters, from Cimabue to Cellini, for three hundred years. The sanctity of sex, the wonder of motherhood, the mystery of birth, had stirred the deeps. This vision had centred the sexual emotions and unified them into love, which arrived at the life-long union of one man and one woman. Cimabue is the pioneer of the age. His great painting, with the defects of an early effort, was carried in a joyful procession by the citizens of Florence, and placed in the church of Santa Maria Novella, and the subject is the Virgin and

the Child. Here is not only art but the feeling of the people for the idea in the art. The Annunciation by Fra Angelico, in the now secularised monastery of San Marco in Florence, belongs to the zenith period of the Renaissance, and reached the zenith of art.

Andrea del Sarto is a genius of the times, and he has an Annunciation in the Pitti Gallery of Florence, which has a distinction all its own. Needless to say, it is a noble work, life size, lovely in subdued colours, exquisite in technique. There Sarto discovers to us his vision of the virgin birth as a force developing the ideal relation of male and female. In the foreground are Mary and the angel announcing to her the spiritual interference in the cosmic process. On the background is the high balcony of a palace, where David in purple robes is looking down upon Bathsheba, who is below the balcony. The idea of the artist is easily read. He sees that the virgin birth, announced by the angel, has so renovated the roots of human feelings that the ideal affection has been summoned up, and a new age of the marriage relation initiated, and vagrant feelings branded withal.

8. Perhaps the climax of æsthetic sensitiveness to beauty, birth, love was reached in the Sistine Madonna of Raphael, now in the Dresden Gallery. It is beyond description,—fundamentally a joy. There is a piece in it which touches the antiquity in us and ruffles the deeps. This is the two

winged cherub boys at the foot, looking upward and backward, with wistful and startled eyes, at the mother and child and the dim cloud of angels far back, the wings quivering from a flight they have made and for a flight to make. The thoughts of the artist break into inexpressible language of colour. The creation has been crowned by the showing of the eternal in Christ, and the mystery, hid in the ages, is revealed only to open another chapter.

The cherub boys haunt us as comers from a previous existence, seeing themselves in the incarnate Child. They are looking backward, inspired by the scene, to an antiquity, and the master has anticipated a thought which is dawning upon us only now, that we are the emotions of God flashed into time, and it is going to be a practical thought to refine us. The cherub infants are remembering what they have been and what they have seen elsewhere, and are awed. Memory is busy.

When our Lord once spoke of Himself as the Light of the world, we find that He put the radiance of it in the memories of His previous existence before He came here. In the incarnation consist recollections; I know whence I came and whither I go; I am from above; I am not of this world; I speak those things which I have heard from the Father; I speak that which I have seen with my Father; I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but He sent

me; before Abraham was I am; Abraham saw my day and was glad.[1]

We are as our Lord; His incarnation is law to ours, though it be removed many degrees from His, as we have shown. It is the elementary truth of our creation, nothing occult and mystic, that we were a thought and an emotion of God before we took form in the flesh; our appearance here is God's thought vocal in speech; we were sent into the world as an incarnation of His love. The Christian mind is scarcely at home in this region, but a little reflection shows us that it is as homely so to think as to speak of our creation. We speak of our creation; let us learn to speak of our incarnation and it will be a sunshine on our creatureship. We have been cast by God into form and He expresses Himself in us. The pattern after which we have taken, the mould is in the heavenlies, something divinely original. These are truths rising on the horizon as the rosy dawn of a new day. They are being called up from the deeps and they are recollections of our ancient home with God. The radiance is borrowed from the incarnation of Christ.

In gleams this radiance broke in the Greek mind, and Plato collected them, and it is known as the Platonic doctrine of Recollection: "The soul must have previously existed somewhere else before she was enclosed in the body";[2] "all souls

[1] John viii. 12 to end.

[2] *Phaedo*, Jowett's *Plato*, vol. i. pp. 447-453; *Meno*, *ibid.* vol. i. p. 282.

do not easily recall the things of the other world"; "few only retain an adequate remembrance of them"; all knowledge is but a recollection of what we knew in a prior existence. Plato is bold and then stops himself, he suspects he has gone beyond his depth. To his doctrine of Recollection he adds: "I have spoken some things of which I am not altogether confident."[1] Since the incarnation, they have broken into light in some directions, though they have not become familiar as they promise to be now. The Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century spoke confidently when one of their leaders sang, I came from God, am a ray of God, and oh, joy! I am going back to God. This coming from God and going back is not a theology of the incarnation for us to learn; we take it out of the hands of creeds. It must be a memory which has been vivified by experience of our place in the creation. We must taste it and it will pass into a banquet such as Whichcote, another of the Cambridge Platonists, has expressed it: No man is "in a good state of religion who doth not find in himself at times ravishings with sweet and lovely consideration of the Divine perfections."

From the Cambridge mystics we go to the poets for experience of the incarnation, who write not the dictation of another but the promptings of their own soul. So Wordsworth, who sees the

[1] *Meno*, Jowett's *Plato*, vol. i. p. 289.

soul as a star which has set in another world to rise here, coming from afar as the thought of God enclosed in flesh, from God who is our home. So Tennyson, in the same vein—

> Moreover, something is or seems,
> That touches me with mystic gleams,
> Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—
>
> Of something felt, like something here;
> Of something done, I know not where;
> Such as no language may declare.

The Ettrick Shepherd seems to have found his fairyland among these unspeakables—

> For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
> And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare,
> But it seemed as if the harp of the sky had rung,
> And the airs of heaven played round her tongue.

Harps of the sky and airs of heaven only play round us when we have seen our ancient relation to the sky and our future relation to the heavenlies. This is the true fairyland of being and romance of the incarnation.

Professor Max Müller had dived into the recesses of the most ancient thoughts of the most ancient peoples. In old age, and in one of his latest essays, he "confesses to the small weakness of thinking that the souls towards whom we feel drawn in this life are the very souls we knew and loved in a former existence."[1] When a love

[1] *Last Essays*, second series, "Is Man Immortal?"

beyond the common has passed outside the range of sense, it becomes a memory sensitive to the subtler and deeper recesses of being. It speaks of our antiquity in God, that we are expressions of an eternal love, divinely incarnate, magnetic with a past. Not long before his death Max Müller is known to have said that he could work on for another hundred years, and he had been a productive worker. But a daughter died, and the heart broke and he folded his arms, laid down and passed, following the love to where it formerly was, the place he and she had quitted for the incarnation here. In our own measure, we all know the broken heart, and its infinite suggestion. Raphael's cherub boys look up spell-bound toward the mother and child with the awe of the memory of the home from which they have come. We look round in supreme moments as if startled by a waft of odours into the remembrance of our country and antiquity in God.

The cherub boys also haunt us as travellers to another world, returning in the company of the incarnation. We see the childhood of another estate, for which we are winged and to which we look with wistful and anxious eyes, half knowing only what is to happen. Beauty, birth, love are immortal, and death only transfigures them. The past is the promise of a future. Fresh as beauty, deep as love, living as birth, so fresh, so deep, so living, is the hope in the mystic past. We look at the vacant seats round the Christmas fireside,

and as the beauty and love that have passed from our side flash upon us, we startle with the surprise of the destiny sprung upon us by the incarnation. When we are the subjects of a centred family love, such as the virgin birth has inspired, then partings take place in the family circle which make us prophetic of another world. There is more in love and beauty and birth than is spent here. Look again and again at Raphael's Madonna, the original or the copy, and the virgin birth becomes the inner truth of the universe to us, and the historic story tells a most natural interference of the spirit world with the sense world.

The woodland bird finds the nut trees without the help of the forester, the bee the nectared flower without the botanist, the stork travels across continents and seas to where its food is, from the centre of Africa to the centre of Europe, without a compass. We find the truth of things by the primal truth in us. A nation whose history is not burnt into its imagination and has to find it in dates, documents, libraries, has no history. The centuries have written themselves upon us, and we have read the writing of the virgin birth and incarnation, authentic as the ages. Enough for us is the authority of our high instincts, first affections, shadowy recollections which are the fountain lights of all our seeing—so Wordsworth. Wesley's hymn of the incarnation rings a chime with the theology of the Reformers and the art of the Renaissance, and these with the Nicene Creed,

and they all with Luke's Gospel and John's Gospel, binding the intervening spaces into one. The strain of the centuries is in us, and Wesley's hymn chants it:—

> Christ, by highest heaven adored,
> Christ, the everlasting Lord,
> Late in time behold Him come,
> Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
> Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
> Hail, the Incarnate Deity!

Thus we marshal the first instalment of the evolved virtues and improved ideals with which the Western man was equipped and which were released into the social economy. The unity of the Godhead, the kinship of God with man, the unity of the race, the worth of human nature, the value of everyday labour, the importance of the body, the centred sexual affections, the memory of our home with God before we came here and the hope of return thither,—these with their implications have given fresh substance and stature to character and an augmented efficiency to the social order. They are derived directly from the incarnation of Christ as a determining force of the first magnitude proceeding from the spiritual universe, awakening the human faculty to a finer activity; and it is the human soul coming into society with the person of Christ in the heavens that does this awakening work in human character and enlarging work in human affairs, and it is the flow of sympathy from this source which is at the same

time the miracle and the commonplace of the Christian religion. The incarnation alone of the Three Forces may be said to have invented a new type of humanity and to have drawn out an indenture for a rearranged economics. But it works with the death and rising again to make the varied, complex, efficient life of the modern world.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

Creation is the poet's idea, looking at the face of the visible order, and tracing it to a Prime Cause. Incarnation is the interior idea, the vision of thought and feeling inwrought into nature by the Creator. We do not know how the cause or the interfusion has come in. But we see forces working and we see the work they are doing. We see thought working as law and principle in the creation, we see emotion working as love and beauty in the incarnation. We see the Incarnation in Christ leading the evolution of Western humanity and making an epoch without a parallel in history. We look to facts and find factors; to effects and find causes. The worship of Christ —communicating with Him—is the most amazing phenomenon of forces. A master of the experimental science of religion has summed up the response in a pithy sentence, Christ liveth in me.

In the morning of the world the religion in

man hears voices of the Eternal Mind in the incarnations of nature. In the noontime we mostly lose these voices; they are mixed with the voices of the incarnation in Bethlehem, to be reheard by us, however. If we are to have a new religion it must be by another incarnation which will show us more of the personality in God and more of the personality in man, which will introduce us into a richer correspondence with a more complex environment, and touch still lower down the abyss of consciousness. The prospect of a something to be which is to transcend the present order of things has always appeared on the distant hills, which has been named the Second Coming and we may name it the Second Incarnation, for all comings are incarnations. Meanwhile we must be doing and we have enough.

The daisy sleeps in the wintry ground of Christmastide and summer dreams in frosty skies and they are waked up. The twilight sense of God in our Drift men and Cave men ancestors has become day, and the sense of Christ sleeping in the Hebrew and classical civilisation has been wakened. If we keep this side weariness, vanity, self, we shall find strength enough in the sympathy of the last Incarnation to will the highest and work the best in us and serve the loyalist while we wait for the summer of those tendencies with which the whole creation labours, and to which the procession of the ages leads. Larger relations will

come to us when we have unfolded to receive them, for the giving and the receiving forces are co-operant.

In the Dresden Gallery we have Correggio's Madonna of St. George. Under the cupola the Virgin is seated with the babe. On the right side is St. George with his armour beside him, and the dragon at his feet. He is looking to the babe as the sources of the victory appointed to all mankind in this anarchy, for the Seed of the woman shall crush the head of the dragon. But the detail which I select is, that on the left where St. Gemimianus presents the child with a Gothic church or cathedral, and the child stretches out his hand to receive the gift. The artist of the sixteenth century traces the sources of a renovated worship, religion, art, music, to the incarnation, and knows no future under another controlling force. The genius of progress, as yet, has seen no other impelling cause, every epoch since the sixteenth century has been a renascence of that century, and every epoch to be will repeat the past. Continuity and method will not be broken. We expect another coming or incarnation more affluent and more potent, which will make God more worshipful with wonder and man more human with love. Creation began with incarnation and will continue this way.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father:

WHEN THOU TOOKST UPON THEE TO DELIVER MAN, THOU DIDST NOT ABHOR THE VIRGIN'S WOMB: WHEN THOU HADST TASTED THE SHARPNESS OF DEATH, THOU DIDST OPEN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN TO ALL BELIEVERS.

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